Transnational Policy-Making on Social and Emotional Learning in Crisis-Affected Contexts: The Case in Lebanon

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Dedication

For Emma 태이, Soyi 소이, my inspiration

For Daniel 창식, my greatest comfort

For my parents 엄마, 아빠, my foundation 오늘의 나를 있게 해주신 나의 근간

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Abstract of Dissertation

Transnational Policy-Making on Social and Emotional Learning
in Crisis-Affected Contexts: The Case in Lebanon

This study examined the complex processes and underlying mechanisms in the formation of Lebanon's national social and emotional learning (SEL) policy since the Syrian refugee influx in 2011. SEL has been increasingly adopted as a policy solution to promote learning and well-being in contexts affected by crisis and fragility in the Global South, but SEL has been analyzed and evaluated mostly in terms of individual programs. Rarely have researchers examined how, why, and by whom SEL has become a traveling global education policy. A comparative case study methodology was used to follow SEL as a policy discourse and traveling idea across multiple scales. Analytical frameworks from cultural political economy and key theoretical concepts from critical policy studies undergird this study, in which both policy actor-oriented endogenous drivers and exogeneous cultural, political, and economic drivers are shown to enable national SEL policy-making in Lebanon.

The primary findings of this research illuminate the heuristic, longitudinal, and complex processes of the SEL policy adoption and formulation in Lebanon, which have evolved through interactions across actors, events, and technological apparatuses on multiple scales, highlighting the unique nature of such processes in the context of a crisis-affected Global South. Although the national SEL policy-making process in Lebanon was perceived to epitomize collaboration by those involved, the roles undertaken by transnational–national actors and national policy-makers in those processes reflected unequal power dynamics in global education aid architecture. A complex group of

transnational–national actors deterritorialized and promoted SEL as a global policy solution and then powerfully mobilized and brought SEL into Lebanon with financial resources. Only then, national policy-makers reactively recontextualized and strategically maneuvered internationally funded initiatives to align with the national priority. From the perspectives and experiences of national–local actors, implementation at the school level would be problematic because of the endemic mistrust of the Lebanese government among the teachers. A comparison of the conceptualization of SEL across policy actors vertically and horizontally revealed a mismatch between the narrowed, technocratic understanding of SEL as a global solution and the diverse and locally specific educational problems it was intended to address.

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List of Abbreviations

ALP	Accelerated Learning Programs
CASEL	Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
CCS	Comparative Case Study
CERD	Center for Educational Research and Development
CIE	Comparative and International Education
CPE	Cultural Political Economy
DFID	Department for International Development
DGE	Directorate General of Education
DOPS	d'Orientation Pédagogique et Scolaire (School Guidance and Counseling Department)
D-RASATI 2	Developing Rehabilitation Assistance to Schools and Teacher Improvement 2
EASEL	Ecological Approaches to Social Emotional Learning
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EFA	Education For All
EiE	Education in Emergencies
ESDP	Education Sector Development Plan
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
GWU	George Washington University
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IRB	Institutional Review Board

IRC	International Rescue Committee
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
MEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
NFE	Nonformal Education
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NYU	New York University
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PMU	Program Management Unit
PSS	Psychosocial Support
QITABI	Quality Instruction Towards Access and Basic Education Improvement
RACE	Reaching All Children with Education
RRP	Regional Response Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEL	Social and Emotional Learning
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	The UN Refugee Agency
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestinian Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Chapter 1. Introduction

Influence and pressure from transnational actors in national education policy-making and reform have increased in the Global South. A growing body of literature related to global education policy has focused on the rise of international organizations, including among others bilateral government donor agencies, multilateral governmental organizations, and international nongovernment organizations (INGOs), all of which have become "key transmitters of particular views of education policy" (Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018, p. 14); yet these organizations have not completely usurped local and national actors. Instead, local actors are key in reinterpreting and recontextualizing seemingly global education policies within specific complex historical, economic, and political contexts (Ball, 1990; Peck & Theodore, 2010; Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). The dynamic and complex education policy-making among transnational actors and national–local actors is even more present in countries affected by crises or with ongoing fragility in the Global South. This presence is generally the result of significantly higher numbers of transnational actors in countries affected by crises and in contexts where the nation–state has an education system and governance system perceived as weaker than those in stable, low-income contexts.

One of the education programs that has become a "global model" (Steiner-Khamsi, 2010, p. 334), increasingly adopted as a policy solution in the crisis-affected contexts in the Global South is social and emotional learning (SEL). Initiated by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), the most widely used definition of SEL states that it is "the process through which children and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to understand and manage

emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions" (Weissberg et al., 2012, p. 4). Although not an accepted single, consistent, or cross-national definition of SEL (Hoffman, 2009; Humphrey, 2013; S. M. Jones & Doolittle, 2017), it has been generally accepted as a working definition of SEL and has thus been used in this paper.

SEL has been called a "missing piece" (Elias et al., 1997, p. 1) and has emerged alongside similar soft skills required to enhance the quality of learning. These include, for example, 21st-century skills, life skills, positive education, character education, and global competence education, and more broadly, sustainable development goal (SDG) Target 4.7 themes comprising global citizenship education, human rights, and sustainable development. In conflict or crisis-affected contexts in the Global South, SEL and psychosocial support (PSS) are often interchangeable; but PSS has subsumed SEL and is a holistic approach fostering psychological well-being and resilience in individuals, families, and communities (Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies [INEE], 2016; S. M. Jones et al., 2020).

Transnational actors have increasingly included social and emotional skills, or SEL, as a part of their education policy and strategy in the Global South. For example, an education strategy for 2019–2023 (United States Agency for International Development [USAID], 2018) explicitly described social–emotional skills as a learning outcome along with other academic outcomes from preprimary through higher education, both in stable and crisis-affected contexts. Education Cannot Wait (ECW), the multilateral global fund dedicated to education in emergencies and protracted crises, announced that all ECW-funded countries were required to include school-based and focused Mental Health and

Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) interventions and activities, in which SEL was described as a key approach (ECW, 2021).

Meanwhile, some have raised concern and criticism that SEL or broadly related education programs promote soft skills from critical policy scholars, cultural theorists, and social justice educators. From the critical policy scholars' standpoint, education that promotes behavior changes, such as SEL, is seen as (a) a policy discourse promoting neoliberal global education agenda (Verger et al., 2016); (b) part of a skills discourse and economic competitiveness (Dale & Robertson, 2007; Klees, 2016; Sum & Jessop, 2013); and (c) a form of psychological, behavioral, and therapeutic governance (Ecclestone, 2016; R. Jones et al., 2011). Culturalists have pointed out that SEL normalizes and prefers Eurocentric or White, middle-class American culture and values (Denham & Weissberg, 2004; Hoffman, 2009). In addition, SEL programs have been criticized for their lack of acknowledgment of the importance of broader social, economic, and cultural contexts from the social justice perspective (Jagers et al., 2019).

Statement of the Problem

In the field of Education in Emergencies (EiE), researchers of SEL in the Global South have been mostly concerned with the impact of individual SEL interventions in nonformal education (NFE) settings on dimensions of educational outcomes from an instrumental or rationalist approach to policy. The objective of their research has been to provide evidence to an implementing organization regarding what works in SEL programming to improve current SEL practice by adding specific interventions, changing dosages of the interventions, or providing interventions of varying lengths. In crisis-affected or fragile contexts in the Global South, humanitarian aid organizations have

formulated global SEL programs, such as mindfulness and brain game activities, developed and tested in the United States and contextualized and implemented in the Global South. The organizations have, therefore, sought evidence in the Global South to fill the gap left by sources of evidence about SEL coming mostly from the United States and other contexts in the Global North, based on the assumption that policy-makers' decisions would derive from empirical evidence showing that these interventions have worked elsewhere in the Global South.

However, SEL has been perceived and adopted as an effective global solution in crisis-affected settings in the Global South even though growing evidence has suggested that the impact of SEL in such settings is inconclusive. Following current trends toward rigorous research and evidence-based policy (Hart, 2014; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018), research on and evaluation of SEL has increasingly involved randomized controlled trial design in which causal mechanisms between SEL and education outcomes have been identified. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) has attempted to connect SEL skills to academic and social and emotional outcomes, but the results have been mixed across countries. Although a marginal increase occurred in reading and math scores of students in Lebanon, Niger, and the Democratic Republic of Congo who participated in various SEL interventions compared to those who did not, none of the three county programs yielded a positive impact on social-emotional or mental health outcomes after the additional SEL interventions (Dolan & Weiss-Yogonda, 2017; Kim et al., 2019; Torrente et al., 2019; Weiss-Yagoda, 2021). Such observations support the point that critical constructivists make: that policy-makers have typically adopted policies because they believed SEL would work or because policy-makers were persuaded by

other economic and political factors and not because they reviewed all available evidence (Mundy et al., 2016; Steiner-Khamsi, 2004; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018).

Heightened interest and significant investment in SEL policy and programming in the Global South, particularly in crisis-affected or fragile contexts, demand that researchers examine how, why, and by whom SEL with its related education programs has become a global model. Although useful in understanding how individual programs work at the level of educational practice, it is not a matter of "programmes that work; but it is the underlying reasons or resources that they offer subjects that generate change" (Dale, 2005, p. 141). Still lacking is literature investigating SEL from the perspective of critical education policy with a focus on processes and reasons that it has been included as a traveling global education policy (Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018), especially in the Global South. Increasingly, both international organizations and national governments have grown interested in adopting SEL approaches in formal education setting; however, at the national–local level, rarely have researchers investigated macropolitical issues, which have influenced national formal education policy formation and agenda setting.

This research is significant and adds to the theoretical discussion in critical education policy studies by filling in the gap left by empirical studies with focus on policy adoption and formation process in Lebanon, a crisis-affected country in the Global South. Those in the field of critical education policy have traditionally focused on theorization at the macrolevel and have produced the empirical research mostly on the Global North. Although critical education policy research on the Global South has recently increased significantly (Altinyelken, 2018; Edwards & Klees, 2012; Verger,

Fontdevila, & Zancajo, 2018), the research has been predominantly focused on low-income but stable contexts. Despite the exponential growth of research on crises-affected countries or countries with weak education system and poor governance (Burde et al., 2017), only a few scholars have focused their work on such contexts from the perspective of critical education policy. Their research has focused on the theorization of the relationship between education and peacebuilding (Novelli et al., 2017), the sociocultural policy approach to refugee education (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019), and global-level education policy (Dryden-Peterson, 2016; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013). To date, no researchers have investigated SEL policy-making in low-income, crisis, or conflict-affected contexts from the perspective of critical education policy.

I theorized that SEL and other related policy ideas were mobilized as part of rapidly circulating educational values and ideologies on what makes good education (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The definition of quality education has expanded considerably compared to millennium development goals (MDG)s, which were limited to access to basic education and gender parity (Tikly, 2020). By adding affective outcomes, the education SDG also quilts together "sometimes contradictory interests, discourses, and initiatives in the area of international education and development [as well as] the relationship between education and other domains of sustainable development" (Tikly, 2020, pp. 6–7). For example, according to Verger (2014) the education privatization agenda has continued to be adopted as a prominent policy around the world regardless of inconclusive evidence of its effectiveness because of its intentional framing by partnership, school choice, or school autonomy (p. 19). Ideology and discourses associated with SEL and the problems SEL purports to solve vary but were constructed

with a global commitment to the provision of high-quality education and the knowledge economy. Theorization occurred from the perspectives of critical policy sociology and policy mobilities on the way SEL discourse traversed local and national policy spaces (Williamson, 2019), but a critical gap remained in tracing the way SEL discourse traveled to and within the Global South.

Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this study was to examine the complex processes and mechanisms invoked in formulating SEL and PSS as national policies, focusing on the role that policy actors at multiple levels have played. The research also traced SEL and related terms across multiple scales and across time with the intention of illuminating the power dynamics defining and disseminating SEL and related discourses.

This study was designed to explore the following research questions:

1. What were the processes by which SEL developed into national education policies in Lebanon since the Syrian refugee influx? And in particular, how and why did transnational–national actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors influence the institutionalization of national SEL policies?
2. How are discourses on SEL similar or different at the global, national, and local levels; and how have they evolved over time?
    (a) What are the similarities and differences in the conceptualization of SEL (in the policy texts and in discussion) by transnational–national policy actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors?
    (b) How have the problems SEL was intended to address evolved over time?

Significance of the Research Context: Lebanon

Lebanon can generate insightful findings from its early phase of the national curriculum reform process within the complex crisis-affected context where numerous humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors co-exist. The country has undergone a dynamic, recurring and nonlinear context of crises—a complete mixture and disjuncture of post-conflict, refugee-hosting, and political and financial instability. Lebanon has hosted the largest number of refugees per capita ever recorded (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2021). The Beirut Blast in August 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic only worsened the complexity of Lebanon's crisis context. The World Bank Group Middle East and North Africa Region (2021) reported a 40% decrease of per capita GDP from 2018 to 2020, and called the financial and economic crisis in Lebanon "the most severe global crises episodes globally since the mid-nineteenth century" (p. xi). A number of INGOs, including IRC, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), World Vision, Save the Children, implemented SEL–PSS programming in Lebanon from the early stage of the Syrian refugee influx in NFE settings. This context allowed me to trace the evolution of SEL-related discourses since the Syrian refugee influx into Lebanon in 2011–2012.

From the SEL standpoint, Lebanon provided a unique opportunity to research SEL policy-making in the formal education system to examine SEL as a policy and discourse beyond the scope of a single education program; furthermore, the presence of diverse transnational humanitarian and development education actors accommmodated multiple perspectives on the national SEL policy-making processes. SEL programming attracted strong interest in INGOs' NFE settings in crisis-affected contexts in the Global

South, but few countries in that region of the world incorporated SEL terminology and social and emotional competencies into the formal education system. At the time of this writing (June 2021), the Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD) and d'Orientation Pédagogique et Scolaire (DOPS)[1] under the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) worked on the development of a national SEL framework to be included in a Lebanese Curriculum Framework at the basic education level (Grades 1–6). The national SEL Framework under development was supported by transnational policy actors, including Harvard EASEL Lab, Global TIES for Children,[2] IRC as well as USAID. Unfortunate multifaceted crises put the country in a unique and pertinent context for analyzing the macropolitical, social, and economic factors influencing the institutionalization of SEL in Lebanon.

Meanwhile, the educational context in Lebanon has had multiple deep-rooted challenges across the system. As with other public systems in country, education governance in Lebanon was considered weak because of its strong religious and political power in the system (World Bank, 2015). One of the key features of the Lebanese education system was private sector domination of education and the poor reputation of public education (Abdul-Hamid & Yassine, 2020; Shuayb, 2016; Zakharia, 2008, 2011). In 2018, a total of 71% of Lebanese students were enrolled in private schools and again divided as follows: 14% of Lebanese students in subsidized private schools, 59% of Lebanese students in paid private schools, and only 29% of Lebanese students enrolled in

[1] *d'Orientation Pédagogique et Scolaire* translates to the School Guidance and Counseling Department.

[2] Global TIES for Children is an international research center established in 2014 at New York University (NYU), where it is a part of the Institute of Human Development and Social Change. In this paper I call it "NYU TIES", which was most often used by my research participants.

public schools. By the end of 2018, non-Lebanese students represented 45% of total students in the public education system, 70% of whom were enrolled in the second shifts[3] (Abdul-Hamid & Yassine, 2020, p. 49). Ironically, according to the World Bank's analysis based on data from the CERD under the authority of the MEHE, expenditures to the public education sector indicated that school allowance for civil servants enrolling their children in paid private school occupied 21% of the total expenditure to the public sector in addition to the 7% direct subsidies to fee–private schools (Holland, 2007, p. 4).

Theoretical Foundation and Conceptual Framework

This dissertation was built upon multiple strands of critical global education policy studies to understand the relationship between globalization and education policy in the context of the crisis-affected Global South. Theorists in this area have tended to focus on divergence across various contexts and examine how global policies and programs are reinterpreted, recontextualized, or selectively borrowed in different contexts and in different ways. Three key tenets deduced from a few critical education policy theories essential in framing the design of this study were (a) power and inequality in critical theory, (b) multiscalar transnational governance of education, and (c) policy as a complex process and policy as practice. I used the theoretical foundation to delineate global drivers at the macro level as well as national and local drivers that influenced

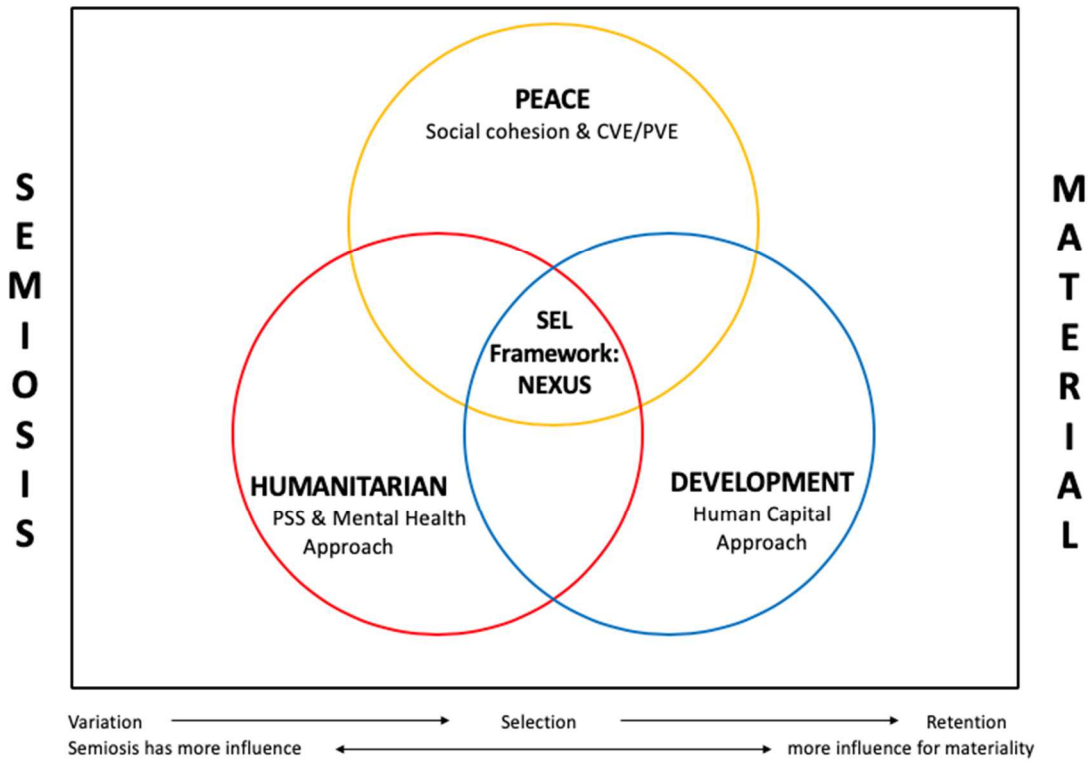
[3] As the number of Syrian refugee children increased exponentially, the MEHE decided to implement a second shift program during the 2013–2014 school year. Under this system, Lebanese students attend the first shift in the morning, and non-Lebanese students, including the majority of Syrian refugee students, attend the second shifts at a same public school in the afternoon (Adelman et al., 2019). The second shifts begin between 2 and 3 p.m., and end after completing five 50-minute periods; the actual schedule depends upon the schedule of the first shifts (MEHE, 2019). Before the 2013–2014 school year, fewer Syrian refugee students attended school in the morning along with Lebanese students.

adoption and recontextualization of national SEL policies as an example of a globally travelling policy in Lebanon.

The conceptual framework was intended to connect a theory-oriented field of critical education policy studies in Comparative and International Education (CIE) and a practice-oriented field of EiE. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the dissertation. The figure first depicts the policy and programming approaches in EiE—humanitarian, development, and peace (or security) approaches—to map out the discourses related to SEL. The research was designed to explore SEL policy adoption and production in Lebanon, where humanitarian, development, and security or peace approaches coexist. I then framed these EiE policy approaches, using the Cultural

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework of the Dissertation



Note. Adapted from Sum & Jessop, 2013, p. 403.

Political Economy (CPE) framework. The horizontal axis indicates the evolution of the discourses over time, and aims to understand how and to what extent SEL discourses and practices have evolved from a humanitarian approach to one focusing on development and peace.

The conceptual framework depicts some theoretical propositions related to SEL, likely used by various groups of transnational actors in each approach of programming. For example, the humanitarian circle represents transnational policy actors who have taken a short-term humanitarian approach in addressing the social and emotional needs of Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese children. In this approach, I assumed PSS and mental health discourses likely to verify the need for SEL framework development. The second circle is the development approach. Increasingly, funding for Syrian refugee response is equally allocated for direct services for refugees through NFE programs and the MEHE's institutional capacity building. The adoption of SEL as a national framework would likely be explained based on human capital theory, explaining the contribution of SEL to academic achievement and skills development. Finally, the peace circle represents the continuation of post-conflict and unstable geopolitical nature of Lebanon in the Middle East region. From this perspective, the potential contribution of SEL to social cohesion and countering–preventing violent extremism is likely to be prioritized.

In operationalizing the conceptual framework and theoretical foundations, I applied two analytical frameworks from CPE approach. Drawn from the broad praxis of the critical political economy, CPE analysis incorporates the cultural processes of sense- and meaning-making to economic and political relations (Higgins & Novelli, 2020; Sum

& Jessop, 2013). First, three evolutionary mechanisms—variation, selection, and retention—from CPE were used to systematically analyze macro political, economic, social, and contextual factors that have shaped the SEL–PSS policy adoption in Lebanon (Jessop, 2010; Sum & Jessop, 2013). The evolutionary mechanism was intended to delineate the role of semiotic and material factors in policy adoption and formulation phases.

Second, Sum and Jessop's (2013) four modes of selectivities were used to analyze and describe the process of how SEL was included and drafted into the national education policy and child protection policy. Using the four modes of selectivities (discursive, agential, structural, and technological) made possible analyzing how transnational actors constructed problems and solutions and why national policy-makers decided to develop the national SEL framework over other global education policies and programs. The CPE analytical frameworks, therefore, allowed examination of the underlying mechanisms and contexts of national SEL policy adoption. The frameworks were useful to delineate within the context of Lebanon how and why SEL, as an example of a globally travelling policy, was selected for retention as a part of the formal education system in Lebanon.

Summary of Methodology

A comparative case study methodology (CCS) was used to answer the research questions (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). To describe national SEL policy-making in Lebanon, the approach "traced people and connection across space and time" (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p. 17). The aim of this study was to analyze the transnational policy-making process of SEL in Lebanon vertically, horizontally, and transversally. First, I conducted a *horizontal comparison* across four different types of teachers: (a) public

school teachers at both first shift (Lebanese) and second shift (Syrian refugees) schools; (b) public school teachers of Lebanese students[4]; (c) private school teachers of Lebanese students, and (d) teachers at NFE centers of only Syrian refugee students. Second, I also made a *vertical comparison*. Not confined to global, national, and local levels, I focused on dynamic interactions among actors, discourses, and events across multiscalar sociopolitical contexts in comparing vertically (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, pp. 73–75). Finally, a *transversal comparison* was mainly effected by incorporating historical analysis (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p. 93). This perspective is reflected in the historization of the national SEL–PSS policy-making in Lebanon in Chapter 4.

The data collection methods involved the following: (a) document analysis, using critical qualitative content analysis as an analytical approach to 21 key global policy texts; (b) document analysis of key Lebanon's education reform–strategy, using critical qualitative content analysis of 12 policy texts; (c) secondary qualitative data: five semi-structured interviews; (d) 23 semi-structured interviews with transnational–national actors; (e) four semi-structured interviews with national policy-makers; (f) six semi-structured interviews with national–local actors; and (g) 15 semi-structured interviews with teachers. All interviews were conducted virtually, using video conferencing platforms (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft TEAMS).

The data analysis process was iterative, reflexive, and recursive. With the qualitative case study design of this research aimed at the processes of policy formation, I focused on "developing the actual events and processes that led to specific outcomes by

[4] In both (b) and (c), some non-Lebanese students were included in both first shifts public schools and private schools.

discovering actors' reasoning and circumstances in specific contexts" (Maxwell, 2012, p. 37). Four main steps constituted my data analysis: (a) data immersion, (b) coding-categorizing, (c) connecting strategies, and (d) synthesis and interpretation (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Maxwell, 2013; Miles et al., 2014). I undertook both deductive and inductive approaches to analysis because my initial categories and subcategories were generated from the research questions and the analytical frameworks.

Statement of Potential Significance

The findings and discussion of this study potentially yield the following six implications. First, the findings from this study have implications for SEL and related education research in EiE. They highlight the utility of analyzing SEL and broadly EiE programs from the perspective of "*programme ontologies*, which accounts for how programmes and policies actually work" instead of "*programme*, which is intervention, policy, or innovation" (Dale, 2005, p. 140). Second, this research has implications for EiE practice that supports social and emotional development and well-being in crisis-affected contexts. The findings from this research call for diverse and context-relevant SEL approaches and programs ensuring the goals of equity and social justice for margialized populations (Bajaj, 2018; Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016; Zakharia, 2017). Third, the findings of this research have implications for critical education policy studies by adding empirical evidence from a specific crisis-affected context in the Global South. The study documents the politics of agenda setting and policy formation with the case of SEL as a traveling global education policy, a topic which has not been extensively examined from beyond the perspective of countries in the Global North (Peck & Theodore, 2010).

Fourth, findings of the research have implications for global governance of humanitarian and development aid. The detailed accounts of policy actors at all levels and the key drivers of their engagement as well as the contextual, political, economic, and cultural drivers behind national SEL–PSS policy-making identified in this research illuminate the larger structural issues of global humanitarian and development aid architecture (Barnett, 2013; Barnett & Duvall, 2005, Menashy, 2019). Fifth, the research design has implications for global education policy research methodology. CCS methodology was appropriate to analyze various policy actors at multiple levels simultaneously and to systematically compare policy actors vertically and horizontally (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). Finally, the remote data collection methods applied in this research design have implications for research and practice in the Global South during the pandemic. The findings indicate remote data collection as a promising alternative to in-person data collection in the EiE contexts and expanded technical responsibilities of national policy-makers and national –local actors in national SEL–PSS policy making processes.

Limitations and Delimitations

I have identified three limitations and two delimitations in this study. First, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, semi-structured interviews were conducted virtually. Although I believed research participants were comfortable participating in a 110-minute interview on a virtual platform, I may have lost some nonverbal interactions and nuances because of the virtual nature of the data collection; however, given the meeting platforms available, I was generally still able to conduct face-to-face (as opposed to telephone or written) interviews with participants. Hence I believe I still captured

nuances. In a few instances, issues occurred in the use of Zoom or Microsoft TEAM as a virtual data collection platform because of brief electricity interruptions and internet connectivity issues. If and when issues or restrictions arose, alternatives, which did not affect the integrity of the data, were sought.

Second, although I tried to find similarities and differences through vertical and horizontal comparison of the research participants based on their social relations (e.g., teachers at public schools, teachers at private schools, and teachers teaching Syrian refugee students; non-Lebanese international actors, Lebanese working at international organizations, national policy actors, and national–local NGOs), the number of research participants per subgroup may not have led to saturation. Therefore, the findings might not be representative of research participants in a subgroup. I believe the findings generated lessons that may be transferrable in another context where similar SEL policy-making processes occur, but as aligned with the qualitative research tradition, a statistical generalizability was not an intention of the proposed research.

Third, because of the multifaceted crises that the Lebanese faced, including the COVID-19 pandemic, financial crises, and the Beirut Blast, some research participants might not have been deeply engaged in my research topic. Based on my experience working in humanitarian contexts as a practitioner–researcher, in which gaining responses that were not about the immediate crisis itself was somewhat difficult, I was concerned about encountering a similar phenomenon; but because I was studying SEL policy-making with its relation to political, economic, and social factors beyond education, I believed that participants were interested in elaborating their perspectives on multiple crises.

In addition, I identified two delimitations in this study. First, teacher participants represented the local level of CCS methodology, but the research findings did not represent a broader local perspective and understanding of SEL, including students and parents. Had the data collection taken place in person in Lebanon as originally planned before the pandemic, I would have reached out to a diverse group of locals, including students and parents, to fully understand social and emotional development, beyond the school settings. With the limitations of the virtual data collection, however, I was limited to teachers at the local level to compare with national and international level discourses and actors. This delimitation will guide my future research after this dissertation.

Second, I would have liked to study both policy formation and policy implementation processes of the national SEL policy in Lebanon, but doing so was impossible because the national SEL framework was not yet finalized. Research participants were asked what benefits and challenges they foresaw for implementing the policy at the school level based on their past experiences. The insights generated recommendations for the implementation phase. Research on both phases from the sociocultural or critical policy perspective in the near future would complement the implementation phase of the policy.

Definition of Key Terms

Key terms relevant to this study are briefly explained in the following section: Competencies and skills: Despite the frequent definition of the term "competency" as a higher order, aggregated concept than "skill," the terms are used interchangeably in practice. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2015) defined a competency as "more than just knowledge and skills, which involves the ability

to meet complex demands, by drawing on and mobilizing skills and attitudes in particular contexts" (p. 4). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization International Bureau of Education (UNESCO IBE, 2016) explained skills as more complex types of know-how based on a set of elementary resources, such as knowledge and micro know-how, but competencies often entail agency of the learners' potential to act. National education stakeholders have often used the terms interchangeably (Ananiadou & Claro, 2009; UNICEF Middle East and North Africa, 2017). Acknowledging the conceptual differences in the two terms, for purposes of this study, I use both terms interchangeably to draw an understanding from a broader range of local participants.

Crisis-affected, conflict-affected, context with fragility*:* "Crisis" and "conflict" are sometimes interchangeably used; in this research, I used "crisis" to denote multiple types and phases, including conflict (Nicolai et al., 2015, p. 14). Aligned with a definition by Nicolai et al. (2015), three broad types of crises include conflict (e.g., war, insurgency), natural disasters (e.g., earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, droughts), and epidemics (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic, Ebola. "Fragility" has often been used to describe the "underlying factor of weak education, social, and political systems, particularly in complex and protracted crises" (Nicolai et al., 2015, p. 14), where more than one type of crisis exists (Shields & Paulson, 2015).

Multilevel, multiscalar, transnational policy-making: In alignment with literature produced by the CPE scholars, I used "multilevel, multiscalar, transnational policy-making" to challenge the methodological nationalism (Dale, 2005, p. 124) in traditional education policy research. Scholars have noted the intersecting, multilevel, multiscalar

nature of global education policy-making, where local, national, regional, and global actors interact across and between the nations (Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018). CPE scholars have used both "scale" and "level" as terms to refer to global, national, local levels or scales, but I preferred to use "scale" over "level" in this research whenever an interaction occurred beyond one level. The notion of scale refers to "multiple entwined geographic scales, that is nested layering of territories, local, subregional, national, supraregional or global regional" (Robertson et al., 2002, p. 475). The concept allows examination of relational aspects of both global and local actors and not necessarily one direction (Robertson, 2018). Dale's (2005) conception of "pluri-scalar governance of education" points to the education policy of a nation–state as governed by multiscalar actors on different activities (p. 132).

Global North and Global South: No perfect terms can classify a wide range of countries in the world into a few groups. Following the critiques of the earlier terminology associated with the Third World (Escobar, 1995), scholars and international development organizations have changed the labeling and methods they use for grouping countries. For example, they switched to developed or developing world; center or periphery; OECD countries and non-OECD countries; developed economies, economies in transition, or developing economies; and low-income countries, lower middle-income countries, upper middle-income countries, and high-income countries are some of those classifications, to name a few (Alonso et al., 2015; Hollington et al., 2015; McFarlane, 2006). Although the Global North–Global South classification may be an oversimplification and introduces a binary notion of the world, I used the terminology as an alternative to other terms that automatically assume superiority–inferiority and a linear

progression of the development (Hollington et al., 2015; McFarlane, 2006). Following critical postcolonial sociology and geography scholars' referring to the terminology, the classification of countries in either category is not by geographic positioning in the North or South but by geopolitical power relations, which encompass the history of colonialism, neoimperialism, and the current impact of global capitalism (Clarke, 2018; Dados & Connell, 2012; Mahler, 2017).

SEL and social and emotional competencies and skills: For this study, I used the most widely used definition of SEL that is "the process through which children and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions" (Weissberg et al., 2012, p. 4). Social and emotional competencies and skills are promoted through SEL. Scholars have arrived at no consensus about how social and emotional competencies and skills are labeled and what this includes or does not include. UNESCO IBE (2016) described how countries use various terms, including generic competencies, key competencies, soft skills, essential skills, core skills, and employability skills, for these hard-to-define, less tangible skills (p. 27). Humphrey (2013) stated that SEL has become a "synonym for any positive or desirable aspect of education that is outside of the basic academic curriculum," similarly understood in related terminology as emotional intelligence, in other words "all those positive qualities that are not IQ" (p. 33).

Outline of Subsequent Chapters

In Chapter 2, I describe and critique an array of relevant literature, and introduce a conceptual framework and key theoretical concepts. In Chapter 3, I explain my research

design and methodology and describe data collection methods as well as the process of data analysis. In Chapters 4 and 5, I present the findings generated from data to respond to the two research questions. In Chapter 6, I synthesize the findings and relate them to relevant literature, revisit the theoretical foundations and conceptual framework to discuss relevance and limitations of the frameworks, and draw implications and recommendations for future research, policy, and practice.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

In this chapter, I describe and critique an array of relevant literature before introducing a conceptual framework that links a theory-oriented field of critical education policy studies and a practice-oriented field of EiE. This study was designed to examine SEL policy adoption, formulation processes, and underlying mechanisms in Lebanon which is both a refugee hosting context and an ongoing fragile context. Thus, I explain a theoretical foundation grounded in multiple strands of critical global education policy approaches to understand the relationship between globalization and education policy in the context of the crisis-affected Global South. Deducing three key tenets from a few critical education policy theories, I use the theoretical foundation to delineate global drivers at the macro level as well as national and local drivers that influenced adoption and recontextualization of national SEL policies as an example of a traveling global policy in Lebanon. Then, I engage in some theoretical debates on SEL and related education approaches to demonstrate their theoretical grounding in the United States.

In the second part of the chapter, I locate the study in the EiE field. Four major policy approaches in global education policy in crisis-affected and fragile contexts are described in the following section along with the debate on the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. I then review and critique current research on SEL in the field of EiE, finding it limited mostly to studies on improving educational practice (Dale, 2005). I argue the benefits of using framing strategies in critical education policy to research SEL policies and programs. Finally, I introduce the conceptual framework of this study, a visual integration of the policy approaches in the EiE field with the CPE approach. Subsequently, I introduce two analytical frameworks drawn from the CPE

approaches that operationalized the theoretical foundation and conceptual frameworks during the research processes. In the following section I first review relevant literature on global education policy theories in CIE.

Debate on the Relationship Between Globalization and Education Policy in CIE

In the field of CIE, multiple scholars have theorized the influence of globalization on national and subnational education systems, focusing on converging global education goals and leaning toward Western modernization (e.g., world culture theory). Others have challenged the assumption of the homogeneity and exogenous diffusion of global policy and models around the world, focusing on divergence across various contexts (e.g., CPE, critical policy sociology, world systems theory, sociocultural studies of policy, borrowing and lending theory, policy mobilities theory). A key difference between convergence and divergence theories is that the latter group of theories attends to power dynamics between and across policy actors at numerous levels in influencing education policies. All divergence theories involve power dynamics and diverse factors at multiple scales, but some (e.g., sociocultural studies of policy, borrowing and lending theory, and policy mobilities theory) center on the agency of national and local actors' recontextualization and selective borrowing from several contexts in different ways. Others (e.g., critical political economy, world systems theory) focus on global, macrolevel phenomena, and critical policy sociology theories also attend to microlevel politics.

Assuming a top-down perspective, proponents of world culture theory have argued that global education goals converge and are driven by the ideas of progress and rationalization from modern Western societies (Boli et al., 1985; Boli & Thomas, 1997; Meyer et al., 1997; Meyer & Ramirez, 2009). The theorists assert that nation–states,

which are embedded in a highly rationalized world culture, naturally and consensually adopt exogenous, "global models or scripts" (Meyer et al., 1997, p. 150). Empirical researchers of world culture theory have explained the following: universalized student participation (McEneaney & Meyer, 2000); the emphasis on education as a human right (Meyer, 2010; Suárez & Ramirez, 2007); the institutionalization and professionalization of international developmental education (Chabbott, 2003); and the field of EiE (Bromley & Andina, 2010). One of the key defining features that distinguishes world culture theory from other divergence theories described in the next paragraph is that it "does not focus on the power of actors but on the power of the culture itself" (Ramirez, 2003, p. 251). World culture theory, a macrosociological institutionalist theory, entails the identification of the world culture. Although its theorists acknowledge and define the differences between the local implementation and a world culture as loose coupling or decoupling (Bromley & Andina, 2010; Ramirez, 2003), they consider loose coupling an exception with particularities not worth further investigation as other divergent theorists do (Carney et al., 2012; Steiner-Khamsi, 2014).

Other theorists in CIE (e.g., CPE, critical policy sociology, world systems theory, sociocultural studies of policy, borrowing and lending theory, policy mobilities theory) have recognized the impact of globalization on the convergence of national–local education goals and systems but have challenged world culture theorists' simplistic and uniform rationale of policy reform at the nation–state level. This diverse group of theories was designed to examine how global policies and programs are reinterpreted, recontextualized, or resisted by multiple actors and drivers. Among such theories, the CPE approach also focuses on globally structured agenda—thus the global-level

influence for national education policies—but interest rests in examining the underlying mechanisms and power dynamics of seemingly converging agendas in the transnational politics of education (Dale, 1999, 2005; Engel, 2008; Robertson, 2005; Robertson & Dale, 2015; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018). Sharing their interest in the politics of education with critical political economists, critical policy sociologists tend to analyze both macrolevel policy formation but also microlevel policy-in-use or policy practices in education systems, using multidisciplinary approaches (Bowe et al., 2017, p. 26; see also Ball, 2015; Gale, 2001).

In world systems theory the focus is on how education transfer occurs from the economic core to peripheral countries (Arnove, 2009; Carnoy, 2014; Samoff, 2013). Culturalists have shown how national and subnational education actors have resisted, altered, and indigenized global practices as appropriate to their contexts (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Anderson-Levitt & Diallo, 2003; Bartlett, 2003). Borrowing and lending theorists seek to understand the political and economic reasons that national authorities might use global speak with donors but promote different content or practice nationally and locally (Steiner-Khamsi, 2010; 2012). In different ways, policy mobilities theorists center their interest on relational and transnational flow of policy through networks, not the transfer of policy from one side to another (Ball, 1990; Peck, 2011). This group of scholars examined the micropolitics of policy formation and the way in which global forms were influential in guiding national policy reform initiatives (Ong & Collier, 2005).

Although I do not disagree with world culture theorists that some seemingly universal forms of education exist at the macro level, as a critical scholar interested in

power and ideology in global policy processes, I am unconvinced by the claims of consensus on the global script across actors with varying power and authority. I particularly find world culture discourse problematic because it is based on the Eurocentric concept of modernization and progress as the globally accepted path to development; in this discourse the unequal power dynamics among global, national, and local actors has not been seriously considered (Carney et al., 2012). Contributing to the group of divergence theories in CIE, I investigated the underlying mechanism, macro factors, and the power dynamics of various policy actors, who influenced Lebanese policy-makers' decision to adopt national SEL and PSS policies. At the same time, I paid particular attention to perceptions and agency of national policy-makers and local policy implementers in recontextualizing and resisting the adoption of the global model as is. In particular, the how and why of the policy-formulation and agenda setting processes were analyzed using the three evolutionary mechanisms[5]—variation, selection, and retention—and four modes of selectivity in a social relations scheme for CPE (Sum & Jessop, 2013). I introduce a CPE approach as an analytical framework for this study, but I situate the study more broadly in the field of critical policy studies in CIE. Key tenets from various divergence theories on globalization and national education, including CPE, critical policy sociology, borrowing and lending theory, policy mobilities theory, and sociocultural studies of policy, are described below as a part of the theoretical foundation.

Theoretical Foundation: Critical Policy Studies in CIE

[5] The categorization of the evolutionary mechanisms of variation, selection, and retention was used to systematically analyze factors that have shaped the SEL–PSS policy adoption in Lebanon. The use of the term "evolutionary mechanism" was not meant to convey "pre-determined sequences that entail evolutionism" (Jessop, 2010, p. 340). Linear or universal paths or stages of policy development constituted the very assumption I intended to challenge and resist in the findings of the research.

Below are three key tenets deduced from across the aforementioned strands of divergent theories, which I describe as critical policy studies: (a) power and inequality in critical theory; (b) multiscalar, transnational governance of education; and (c) policy as a complex process and policy as practice. These three tenets, essential in framing the design of the study, are salient points common across the group of critical theories allowing in-depth analysis of the SEL policy-making process across multiple theories.

Power and Inequality in Critical Theory

Various divergence theories introduced above share critical perspective in theorizing global education policies. Although the term "critical" has no universally accepted definition across theories, they share the understanding that power and inequality have the "ability to disrupt and challenge the status quo" (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 46; cf. Frankfurt School). Likewise, the divergence theories in CIE are used to examine how power and inequality are manifested and challenged in global education policy formation, implementation, and evaluation processes and by different actors (Apple et al., 2009; Ball, 1993, 1994; Dale, 1999; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Steiner-Khamsi, 2012). Ball's (1994) assertion that critical policy analysis should not be used to seek "theoretical purism or conceptual niceties" but should apply multiple theoretical perspectives that best interpret the "relationship of reform to existing patterns of social inequality" (p. 2) aligns with my grouping of critical policy studies in CIE as theoretical underpinning.

Originally inspired by Marxist theory, critical theorists understand the power beyond class relations and economic determinism, taking note of the multiple forms of power exercised in relation to racial, gender, sexual, ethnic, and religious domination and subordination (Apple, 2013b; Kincheloe, 2008). Critical theorists' understanding of

power, hegemony, and ideology delineates the overt and covert power dynamics, hegemony, and ideology formed through global education policy processes in divergence theories. According to Gramsci, hegemony comprises the "modalities of securing domination through social practices oriented to the winning of overt or tacit consent" (Sum & Jessop, 2013, p. 201), a conception of hegemony that is key to the critical theories. In contrast with orthodox Marxist understanding that economic structure determines all other aspects of human life, Gramsci asserted that social groups with more social, political, and cultural control construct "common sense [that] saturates [people's] dominant system of meanings, values, and actions" (Apple, 2013b, p. 22) in much more subtle and ambiguous ways (see also Kincheloe, 2008; Simon, 2001). Apple (2013b) explained this very concept of hegemony and its relation to educational institutions succinctly: Education institutions not only "act as agents of cultural and ideological hegemony, but they [also] help create people who see no other serious possibility to the economic and cultural assemblage now extant" (p. 23), which in the context of global education can be interpreted as a neoliberal capitalist system.

In the field of CIE, critical theoretical perspectives generally share the supposition that global, national, and local education policy actors and systems operate within the context of a neoliberal capitalist world system. Although a term widely used in different contexts, "neoliberalism" can be understood as both material and social relations, which create imaginaries of the "universalization of market-based social relations [for] every sector of society as subject to the logic of commodification, marketization, competition, and cost–benefit analysis" (Apple, 2013a, p. 6; see also Ball, 2012a; Robertson & Dale, 2013). Not only have market-based relations been transplanted to the field of education

through policies like school choice and privatization of education but also through the "idea of knowledge and learners, now called credentials and human capital" (Robertson & Dale, 2013, p. 432).

An interdisciplinary perspective on the critical political economy of education challenges orthodox economics-centered political economy traditions, criticizes structural issues of inequality, and focuses on social justice (Klees, 2016; Novelli et al., 2017; Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008). From the perspective of critical political economy, existing systems and structures like capitalism, patriarchy, racism, sexism, and heterosexism maintain and reproduce inequalities and are, therefore, elements that must be challenged to resolve marginalization (Carnoy, 2014; Griffiths, 2011; Klees, 2016; Means, 2015). Scholars representing these schools of thought have asserted that education systems, programs, and practices are embedded in complex local, national, and global political economies (Dale, 2005; Dale & Robertson, 2007; Robertson & Dale, 2013). Analyzing how globalization affects national education systems through various power dynamics and mechanisms is of interest. For example, Dale (1999) identified a typology of mechanisms of external effects, differentiating borrowing, normal learning, paradigmatic learning, harmonization, dissemination, standardization, installing interdependence, and imposition. These types are based on the diverse characteristics of effect mechanisms like the nature of relationship, explicitness of process, and dimension of power. Dale (1999) explained how the power that influences global education policy has increasingly become "less overt and more difficult to encounter" (p. 8).

According to Ball (2012b), however, power from the perspective of critical policy studies, especially critical policy sociology in CIE is a more "active, penetrating and

flexible concept that is not referenced to position or capacity as such but to performance, achievement, and struggle" (p. 25). He differentiated his concept of power with more traditional organizational theorists' essentialized use of power as authority or legitimacy. For critical theorists, although the oppressive nature of power is often discussed and analyzed, power is understood as necessary for human existence, which could lead to both oppressive and productive consequences (Kincheloe, 2008). Power is not necessarily manifested by a person but as a form of legitimate knowledge through institutional systems of inequality as well (Apple, 2013b). Discursive power is acknowledged as a strong force to influence global education policy across all traditions of critical policy studies in CIE (Ball, 1990; Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe, 2005; Sum & Jessop, 2013). In cultural political economy theory these ideational or cultural factors have been considered in addition to the focus in conventional critical political economy theory on material factors (i.e., economic and political). Critical theorists are interested in studying power, inequality, and marginalization so that critical research can challenge oppressive forms of power and the various forms and structures subordinating those being oppressed (Kincheloe, 2008). The following section contains a discussion of the second tenet of the theoretical framework—multiscalar transnational governance of education—in which the manifestation of power is described at multiple scales through actors, events, and discourses.

Multiscalar Transnational Governance of Education

Education policy and reform are no longer addressed within the boundaries of a single nation–state, and critical global education policy scholars have theorized the multiscalar transnational policy-making with the rescaling of nation–states (Dale &

Robertson, 2012; Engel, 2008; Robertson, 2018). With influence and pressure from global, regional, local, and transnational actors and initiatives, the role of the nation–state in education policy development has been newly configured; the process is often called a "deterritorialization of education policy" (Robertson, 2018, p. 44). Critical scholars have theorized the processes of global education policy; that is, they have considered why and how education policy has been influenced by globalization and various theoretical frameworks (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Ball, 1990; Dale, 2000; Engel, 2008; Peck & Theodore, 2010; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Robertson, 2005; Steiner-Khamsi, 2004).

Policy production, implementation, and policy evaluation processes are no longer located in the traditional nation–state space but are strongly influenced by supranational organizations, events, and discourses (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Dale (2000) most succinctly explained the global (as opposed to world), which is an assumed international community in which a nation–state system is embedded. The term "global" implied "social and economic forces operating supranationally and transnationally, rather than internationally to elude, break down, or override national boundaries, while reconstructing the relations between the nations" (Dale, 2000, p. 428). Accordingly, core problems and solutions of education are framed and addressed at both the national and global levels, and during the process, the role of national and transnational actors—and even problems and solutions themselves—may be changed.

The globalized capital economy has influenced the traditional role of the state in national policy-making processes in the transnational space as opposed to international space or supranational space, indicating that policies are not made above or beyond nation–states but actions, discourses, and interactions "cross borders and flow in and out

of the nation–states' arenas of power with globally structured education agenda" (Moutsios, 2010, p. 122). According to Robertson (2018), local–national–global is an overlapping spatial relationship rather than fixities, and an organization could take both global and local spaces. Education policies have been advanced by actors at various scales—at the global, the regional, the local, and the individual—rooted in these embedded, institutionalized relationships across transnational spaces.

In an examination of the relationship between globalization and education, critical policy perspectives in education have yielded an understanding that education policy can no longer be perceived as exclusively made and implemented at the nation–state level; in fact, the governance of education comprises numerous problems, likely selective and based on interactions between the globally structured agenda and the national social order (Dale, 2005). Opposing orthodox comparative education that put the nation–state at the center of methodology, Marginson and Mollis (2001) stated that "governance remains national in form, and nation–states continue to be central players in a globalized world, but partly as local agents of global forces, for the nation–state now operates within global economic constraints" (p. 601). Based on globalization and its relation to education policy-making, no agreed-upon definition exists; however, global governance can be understood as an "increasingly complex policy landscape in which state and non-state actors, which operate at a range of scales, gain political authority and presence in policy fields" (Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018, p. 6). Mundy and Manion (2014) succinctly described the notion of global governance enabling researchers to examine power in new places and new policy actors beyond traditional nation–states.

From the perspective of critical political economy, the concept of global

governance is not simply a positive one that would enhance collaboration, cooperation, or consensus among governments and others (Gordenker et al., 2017). Scholars from critical policy perspectives applied the notion of global governance in analyzing the role of various policy actors and power in the increasingly organized field of humanitarian aid (Barnett, 2013; Barnett & Duval, 2005) and the global refugee regime (Betts, 2015; Betts & Milner, 2019). In the field of CIE, diverse scholars used the concept to understand the role of international organizations, such as the World Bank (Mundy & Verger, 2015), the Global Partnership for Education (Menashy, 2016), civil society organizations (Mundy & Murphy, 2001), and corporate actors (Robertson et al., 2012). Theoretically, Dale (2005) suggested a "pluri-scalar governance of education," acknowledging that neither nation–states nor international agencies carry out any of the activities of funding, ownership, provision, and regulation solely on their own (p. 132). From the CPE perspective, Tikly (2017) analyzed a different kind of power in the global education governance represented with Education for All. Lopes Cardozo and Novelli (2018) examined the role of the transnational network organization, specifically the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), in the evolution of the field of EiE from the concept of global governance.

Although critical education theorists have generally attended to both macro global-level dynamics as well as national- and local-level factors in driving national policy changes, some theorists in particular have provided thick descriptions of the agency of national and local actors in recontextualizing, resisting, and mutating global education policies based on their particular contexts. Policy borrowing and lending theorists have found national policy-makers strategically adopting global discourses and

global program models and selectively implementing imported policies to address local political and economic pressures in Mongolia (Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe, 2006) and Latvia (Silova, 2004) and in Turkey and Uganda (Altinyelken, 2018). Sociocultural theorists focused on the disconnect between policy and practice have provided ethnographic evidence on how global policies, such as student-centered pedagogy and teacher autonomy, have been appropriated in various contexts in Guinea (Anderson-Levitt & Diallo, 2003) and Brazil (Jungck, 2003). Peck and Theodore (2015) focused on the ideological alignment of particular programs that were mobilized and traveled to a new context, where the model constantly mutated and was practiced in ways very different from its origin. The rejection of the flat ontology of policy-making within the geographic space of a nation–state allows a dynamic view of policy as practice and policy as a complex process, discussed next as the third tenet of the theoretical framework.

Policy as a Complex Process and Policy as Practice

In critical policy studies in the CIE framework, policy is understood as a complex process and as practice—from a critical constructivism and social cultural approach to policy—that must be examined as a continuum within specific, broader economic, political, historical, and cultural contexts (Ball, 1993; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018). In contrast, the rationalist or instrumentalist approach describes the policy process as linear and simplistic and state policy-makers as rational actors, who make decisions based on sufficient analysis of scientific evidence, which aligned with the policy science approach to public policy (DeLeon & Vogenbeck, 2007; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). From the rationalist point of view, policy processes are orderly, can be defined by stages, and evolve in a linear manner. For example, Carley (1980)

introduced three major elements of policy making (value–conflict and resolution, bureaucratic maintenance, and analytic rationality) and four activities (policy science, policy analysis, decision-making, and implementation) as a simple model of the process of policy making. This generally represents the reductionist approach and a one-size-fits-all understanding of the complex process of policy-making.

In the field of CIE, the implicit logic of the rationalist approach to global education policy has become prevalent in international bilateral and multilateral governmental organizations and INGOs with an approach to education policies and programs based on what works (Verger, 2014). Increasingly, international organizations and bilateral donors have assumed and legitimized funding decisions on specific education policy and programs based on scientific research, which is called an evidence-based policy approach for education policy decisions (Apple, 2013b; Samoff, 2013). Subsequently, this led to the renaissance of rationalist, postpositivist scientific rigor and methodologies, such as the randomized controlled trial approach and large-scale cross-national education outcomes assessments, which have been increasingly viewed as more rigorous and superior than other methodologies (Erickson, 2018; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018). The discourses were based on the assumption that national and international decision-makers will adopt education policies based on the best possible evidence available. In the CIE field, less explicit actors, such as economists who have used rate of return or cost–benefit analysis techniques, have argued that the processes of policy-making are as prescriptive and predictable as rationalist policy scholars have asserted (Psacharopoulos, 2014; Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1985); but the acceptance

of more nuanced rationalist or instrumental perspective to global education policy has become prevalent (Verger, 2014).

Unlike those espousing the rationalist or instrumentalist approach to global education policy, critical constructivist scholars have drawn perspectives from a broader social theory and international relations discipline and understand policy as a complex process focusing on ideational factors in addition to material factors (Adler, 2013; Ball, 1993; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Scholars taking the sociocultural approach to policy have described the importance of examining both the macrostructural level of education policies or systems and the microlevel of people's actual experience of the impact of policy (Apple, 2013b; Levinson & Sutton, 2001). From the perspective of critical policy sociology, Ozga (2000) emphasized the importance of engaging teachers and even students in education research. Rooted in the anthropological discipline, the sociocultural perspective on policy can be used to analyze how people, especially those often affected by education policies—teachers, teacher educators, and students—appropriate the meaning of policy through their everyday experiences (Levinson & Sutton, 2001). From a postcolonial, anthropological standpoint, Tsing (2005) used the metaphor of friction to highlight "the unexpected and unstable aspects of global interaction" (p. 3) and the "awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference" (p. 4). Bartlett and Vavrus (2017) further elaborated the sociocultural approach to policy as "a deeply political process of cultural production engaged in and shaped by social actors [describing how the practice advanced with its interaction with] broader political, social, cultural, and economic contexts" (pp. 1–2).

By assuming a critical constructive perspective on policy, critical policy scholars typically believe the rationalist approach is unrealistic in real life because decision-makers do not have complete information to make decisions as rational actors (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Rui, 2014). Instead, in the critical constructivist approach policy-makers adopt global education policy because they perceive that evidence supporting the relevant policy is strong, and therefore the policy would work (Verger, 2014; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018). From the perspective of critical constructivist policy, public policy is "the authoritative allocation of values" (Easton, 1953, p. 129), and policy-makers commit resources for preferred values (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Ball (1990) described policy as complex, "messy realities of influence, pressure, dogma, expediency, conflict, compromise, intransigence, resistance, error, opposition and pragmatism" (p. 8). Another significant contribution by Ball (1993, 2015) from the critical policy perspective has been the distinction between policy as text and policy as discourse, which he elaborated further as follows: "Discourse is the conditions under which certain statements are considered to be the truth" (Ball, 2015, p. 311).

In the field of critical global education policy, models, and policies, including child-centered pedagogy, competency-based education (or outcome-based education), and low-fee private schools, have traveled extensively across different parts of the Global South. In theorizing how a global education model travels transnationally and the model is adopted and recontextualized by national policy-makers, Verger (2012, 2014) analyzed the adoption of global education policy, focusing on the education policy adoption phase, using the notion of framing and its interaction with evidence-based policy. He used framing to explain how education problems are conceptualized and how programmatic

ideas are strategically mobilized as solutions to problems in order to convince a policy-maker to "buy or not buy into a certain policy" (Verger, Novelli, Altinyelken, 2018, p. 19). Benford and Snow (2000) summarized frame development as three sets of processes based on the review of relevant literature: (a) discursive processes refer to accenting and highlighting certain issues over others; (b) strategic processes include "idealization, embellishment, clarification or invigoration of existing values or belief" (p. 624); and (c) contested processes describe tensions between and within those being framed and opponents.

Once the framing of certain program ideas become successful, policy discourses are circulated through the mobilization process. Global education policy ideas are framed and spread through influential persons, events, working groups, and policy briefs and reports produced by international organizations, bilateral aid agencies, and INGOs (Ball, 1990; Verger, 2012; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018). Chabbott (2003) took a world cultural theorist stance, but her explanation of the role of epistemic communities in constructing a common policy agenda is still relevant. She asserted that regardless of history and localities, "standardized blueprints of how to 'do' development" (p. 5), in which professionals of international organizations specifically problematize, gather, and discuss, and create a final product—global education policy texts. Along with Dale's (1999) attempt to delineate various mechanisms of globalization for national education policy mostly during the policy adoption phase, policy borrowing and lending theories have also explained how national policy-makers selectively borrow pressure from members of their domestic audience on political needs, making them "retroactively define local problems that fit the already existing global solutions or reform package"

(Steiner-Khamsi, 2014, p. 156). Based on the three key tenets in the theoretical foundation of critical policy studies in CIE, I introduce theoretical debates on SEL as an example of a traveling global education policy.

SEL as a Traveling Global Policy

As explained above, I posit SEL as an example of a traveling global model rapidly circulating and deterritorialized (Steiner-Khamsi, 2010). In this section, I provide a brief overview of the theoretical debates on SEL and related education approaches in order to understand the current trend and the reason that SEL became a traveling global policy. I first review the dominant view of education policy as instrumental, social efficiency that allows SEL and other related education approaches to proliferate. Then, I cover the definition and some selected SEL frameworks, asserting that the definition and frameworks developed in the United States were generally adopted and used in the Global South. Finally, theories underpinning SEL and other related education approaches are discussed.

Dominant View of Education Values

The definition of quality education has expanded considerably compared to the earlier MDGs, which were limited to access to basic education and gender parity (Tikly, 2020). Global commitment in education has shifted in its focus from access to education to quality of education. The SDGs on education calls countries to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all. UNESCO (2016) reported that quality education fosters "flexible skills and competencies that prepare learners for diverse challenges" (p. 9). Particularly, SDG Target 4.7 emphasizes the skills and knowledge for "education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyle, human rights, gender equality,

promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of cultures' contribution to sustainable development" (UN General Assembly, 2015, p. 17). Global citizenship education and education for sustainable development and any other related educations for SDG Target 4.7, as specified in the paragraph quoted above, often requires learners to change the current behaviors to those that promote responsible actions (Sinclair, 2013).

Education policy promotes multiple values, including democratic equality, social mobility, and social efficiency among others, but I agree with previous researchers that in the dominant view of social efficiency, education is considered instrumental in promoting private mobility as well as the social development of the national and global knowledge community (Labaree, 1997; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, 2011). In this view producing workers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to operate within the knowledge economy system is perceived as important. The social efficiency view includes perspectives on both public and private goods, but the definition of "public" differs more significantly from the perspective of organizational efficiency and outcome than in the democratic equality view, the focus of which is forming citizens and a socially cohesive society (Labaree, 1997; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The dominant view of social efficiency now emphasizes not only the instrumental value of education for individual mobility and poverty reduction in the Global South but also as necessary for acquiring the knowledge and skills instrumental in contributing to global norms like global citizenship education and sustainable development. Thus, the neoliberal imaginary allocated the particular value of education, and the condition allowed new policy ideas like SEL framed to be aligned with the social efficiency goals.

Definition and Frameworks of Social and Emotional Skills and Competencies

Social and emotional skills and competencies and their variant SEL originated[6] and were operationalized in the United States, emerging as core behavior-related skills necessary in children's learning and healthy development in many subfields of psychology and human development (Durlak et al., 2011; S. M. Jones et al., 2017). In recent years, interest has grown in SEL in the Global South, led by international humanitarian and development actors, including bilateral government donor agencies, multilateral organizations, and INGOs. Definitions of SEL and what the umbrella term SEL entails have been inconsistent, and a common set of skills have been found under many other labels, including character education, 21st-century skills, life skills, soft skills, and noncognitive skills (Hoffman, 2009; Humphrey, 2013; S. M. Jones et al., 2017; S. M. Jones & Doolittle, 2017). In the field of EiE, several initiatives have defined SEL and common competencies and skills that fall under related education approaches.

In low-income and conflict-affected contexts in the Global South, PSS, peace education, and human rights education also entail a similar set of frameworks. Specifically, in conflict-affected or fragile contexts, SEL and PSS are often interchangeably used, but according to INEE, PSS subsumes SEL and is a holistic approach fostering psychological well-being and resilience in individuals, families, and communities (INEE, 2016; S. M. Jones et al., 2020). The title or term preferred by a society or an organization often reflects the recent history of the particular context: In peaceful and stable societies, promoting constructive citizenship has been a focus; and in

[6] The term was reportedly used for the first time in the United States in 1994 (CASEL, 2021).

societies where a concern exists about adolescents and youth in reducing risky behaviors, emphasis has been placed on life skills (Sinclair et al., 2008). SEL has become the preferred term by various groups, including students, parents, and teachers, because of its emphasis on learning and growth, which is aligned with schools' fundamental goals (S. M. Jones & Doolittle, 2017; Prater, 2017).

Here, I first review two most relevant and widely used SEL definitions and frameworks in the United States—the CASEL and the Ecological Approaches to Social Emotional Learning (EASEL) Lab at Harvard —and two frameworks used by humanitarian organizations working in the Global South—IRC and Save the Children. CASEL, the first SEL framework developed in the United States, defined SEL as

> the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (Weissberg et al., 2012, p. 4)

CASEL's five core SEL competencies are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (Weissberg et al., 2012, p. 9).

Another newer but well-acknowledged SEL framework by the Harvard EASEL Lab was introduced by S. M. Jones et al. (2017). In that study, SEL was explained as a "process through which individuals learn and apply a set of social, emotional, behavioral, and character skills required to succeed in schooling, the workplace, relationships and citizenship" (p. 12). They categorized major social and emotional skills and behaviors into three primary domains instead of five—cognitive regulation, emotional processes, and social–interpersonal skills—and added character and mindset as separate skills that

do not fit into the primary categories (S. M. Jones et al., 2017). More recently, the domains evolved into six: cognitive, emotion, social, values, perspective, and identity (S. M. Jones et al., 2020). Mapping available PSS and SEL frameworks and programming documents in EiE, the authors found a wide variety of definitions and frameworks across organizations and contexts as well as the need for more context-specific and relevant SEL–PSS programming and measurement guidance and tools in emergency contexts based on the coding of 24 SEL framework–guidance documents and 37 SEL measurement tools used in emergencies or at least low-income contexts in the Global South.

One of the influential and well-established SEL approaches used in the Global South was developed by the IRC's Healing Classrooms, later renamed Safe Healing and Learning Space (SHLS). IRC adopted the CASEL's definition of SEL, but IRC had its own SEL competencies framework. IRC's SHLS program categorized five competency frameworks—brain building, emotion regulations, positive social skills, conflict resolution, perseverance—and one integrated skill—mindfulness (International Rescue Committee [IRC] Lebanon, 2016, p. 5). The final international SEL framework I examine is Save the Children's framework. Save the Children (2020) endorsed and applied the CASEL's definition of SEL and its five core competencies. Save the Children has focused on rigorous research using its own SEL assessment tools for two different age groups: (a) International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA) for the early childhood age group and (b) International Social and Emotional Learning Assessment (ISELA) for children between six and 12. ISELA categories include self-concept, stress management, perseverance, empathy, relationship, and conflict resolution

(Save the Children, 2019). In addition to the individual-level skills, Save the Children also measures learning environment safety and background information to better understand the development of the SEL competencies. IDELA assesses earlier SEL skills—empathy, emotional awareness, self-awareness, solving conflict, and peer relationships (Save the Children, 2020).

Across the four key frameworks discussed—CASEL, EASEL Lab, IRC, and Save the Children—self-management, self-awareness (emotion regulation), and collaboration–teamwork are the most common skills or competencies. Social awareness, empathy, and relationship skills are also found in three of four frameworks. Skills, such as perseverance or patience, stress management, and sense of hope for the future are more often found in IRC and Save the Children's frameworks than others. These skills may be considered more relevant in low-resource contexts, particularly in emergencies. Although each of the frameworks emphasize different categories and sets of skills and competencies, they were initially developed or operationalized based on the CASEL's framework.

Theories Underpinning SEL and Other Related Education

Because of the all-encompassing nature of SEL and similar education approaches, the relevant disciplines and underlying theories of the SEL approach are also diverse. As the most common frameworks and definitions indicate, however, well-known SEL programs were rooted in developmental psychology, specifically the confluence of developmental science and prevention science (S. M. Jones et al., 2019; Osher et al., 2016). Emotional intelligence theory and related ideas about selfhood (Hoffman, 2009; Humphrey, 2013) along with developmental psychological models of social and

emotional competencies influenced the early development of SEL (Denham & Brown, 2010; Humphrey, 2013).

The development of SEL was strongly influenced by learning theories emphasizing that learning is not just a cognitive process but also mediated by social interactions and environments. The bioecological paradigm with its levels of systems (micro, exo, macro, chrono systems) and its interactions (mesosystem) served as a foundational framework for much SEL research in the United States and in the Global South (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). A social constructivist theory in which learners co-construct knowledge based on their social and cultural interactions, Vygotsky's zone of proximal development also contributed to the conception of the approach in terms of teacher–student relationships. These theories contributed to developing SEL approaches that fostered the relationship among peers, teachers, family, and school climate (Osher et al., 2016). Other theorists studied resilience and wellness (Cowen, 1994), emotional intelligence theory conceptualizing SEL in terms of one's perception of one's own and others' emotions (Mayer, 2004), and the importance of cognitive regulation and executive functioning (S. M. Jones et al., 2017; Osher et al., 2016).

In the first part of this Chapter, I introduced the theoretical foundation of this research— global education with three key tenets inferred from multiple strands of critical policy theories in CIE: (a) power and inequality in critical theory, (b) multiscalar transnational governance of education, and (c) policy as a complex process and policy as practice. In explaining each of them, I reviewed theoretical and empirical evidence and debate, critiquing as necessary. The three key tenets were influential in designing this research and in devising a conceptual framework. They also influenced the layout of

Chapter 6 as I tied back the key findings in Chapters 4 and 5 to the literature in critical policy studies in CIE. After that I introduced SEL as an example of the education model that is mobilized, traveled, and adopted. I first introduce the dominant view of education value as social efficiency built on the neoliberal imaginary and emphasis on the quality of education. Then, I provide definitions and the established frameworks on social and emotional skills and competencies as well as theories underpinning SEL. In the following section, I locate the research in the field of EiE and introduce theoretical and empirical debates in the field.

Context: Education in Emergencies

The second section of the literature review sets the context for my research. Theoretically framed by critical education policy theories, this research falls into the field of education in emergencies. The section starts with a definition and brief history of the EiE field, followed by a description of the changed nature of conflict and the relationship between conflict, fragility, and education. Then three policy and programming approaches in EiE are described. At the end of the section, a conceptual framework relevant to the EiE field is introduced: the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.

Definition and Brief History of the Field

I have situated this study in the field of EiE, an interdisciplinary subdiscipline of CIE, heavily influenced by other related disciplines like development studies, peace and conflict studies, refugees and forced migration studies, politics and international relations, developmental psychology and anthropology to name a few. To fill the gap in the capacity of crisis-hit national governments to meet the educational needs of affected children, diverse actors have provided education assistance in emergencies and protracted

crises, and the field began to be called "EiE" (Burde et al., 2017; Nicolai et al., 2015). Still a relatively new and emerging field (Buckland, 2011; Dryden-Peterson, 2016; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013), research, theory, and practice in EiE have grown exponentially (Burde et al., 2017; Pherali, 2019). Because of its unique emergence from a field of practice to one of policy, the field of EiE has largely been driven by the practice and research of international aid organizations (Dryden-Peterson, 2016).

From the perspective of international humanitarian actors, the mid-1990s has often been called the beginning of the concerted field of EiE with the end of the Cold War and a series of complex humanitarian emergencies (Burde et al., 2017; Lopes Cardozo & Novelli, 2018; Dryden-Peterson, 2016; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013). A variety of education programs organized since World War II ranged from self-help initiatives by refugee communities (and sometimes as part of decolonization and liberation movements) to small-scale local NGO- and UNHCR-supported programs to government initiatives (Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Sinclair, 2001; Winthrop, 2009; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013).

The importance of the mid-90s as the beginning of a coherent field of EiE can be explained well beyond what endogenously occurred in the EiE field but from extraeducational structures, events, and processes (Dale & Robertson, 2007). The politics of education facilitates understanding an education policy beyond education inputs, illuminating the broader international development and humanitarian community as well as the changing nature of the operational context during the period. Beyond the education sector, the international humanitarian community also underwent significant changes. After the failure of the international aid community to respond to the Yugoslav wars and

the Rwandan genocide, efforts to coordinate across actors became stronger; and the international humanitarian system increasingly emphasized the quality and accountability of aid. Barnett and Weiss (2008) characterized the initiatives as the professionalization, bureaucratization, and rationalization of the field of international humanitarian assistance.

Moreover, since the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, the education in crisis setting has been recognized as an important context to achieve the goals of Education for All (EFA) and MDGs, which led to the establishment of the INEE in 2000. With the establishment and evolvement of the INEE as a transnational advocacy network, the field of EiE also became institutionalized (Mundy & Murphy, 2001). The INEE Minimum Standards Handbook for Education, published in 2004, is also now well acknowledged as an international reference frame (Steiner-Khamsi, 2012) in the EiE field. Another significant achievement of the institutionalization of EiE as a field was the successful inclusion of the Education Cluster as one of the 11 clusters under the major humanitarian reform in 2005 (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, n.d.; Winthrop, 2009).

At the time of this writing (June 2021), policy, practice, and research in EiE has continued to grow with the expanded scope of operational context to fragile states because of the changing nature of conflicts as well as the heavy focus on funding in these contexts by Western governments since the September 11, 2001, attack in the United States. Increasingly, development actors have also invested more in education programming in crisis-affected and fragile contexts. For example, the Global Partnership for Education (2019), a partnership for funding initially established as the Fast Track Initiative for EFA, allocated 60% of its funding to countries affected by fragility and

conflict. In 2016 during the World Humanitarian Summit, the Education Cannot Wait (ECW, 2021) fund was established as the first global fund specifically for education in emergencies.

Conflict, Fragility, and Education

In this section the relationship among conflict, fragility, and education is briefly discussed. Two main reasons explain the increased interest in countries affected by conflict or fragility: The nature of conflict has changed, and development and security approaches have increasingly been applied in EiE policy and programs. Before describing the policy and programming approaches in the EiE field, I cover the broader context where EiE policies and programs operate, which countries constitute that context and how the context has evolved. According to the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC), "conflict" denotes "war-like encounters between armed groups within the borders or from different countries" (n.d.). The IFRC defined "complex emergencies" as a "complex combination of both natural and man-made causes and different causes of vulnerability, such as food insecurity and epidemics" (n.d.). A related concept, the term "fragile states" has no agreed-upon definition, but generally, aid communities have used the term for states with weak governance, unable to provide protection, security, and basic social services for their citizens (S. E. L. Bengtsson, 2011; Davies, 2011; Kirk, 2011; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013). "Fragile states" has been noted as a political and controversial term, which has led several organizations to eliminate it altogether (e.g., INEE's Education & Fragility Working Group) or to use only "fragility" instead of "fragile states" (e.g., GPE; S. E. L. Bengtsson, 2011; Burde et al., 2017).

Current conflict contexts and humanitarian practices differ from earlier times in two ways. First, according to the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), conflicts in the 21st century have been mostly intrastate (as opposed to interstate) wars; but the number of internationalized intrastate conflicts, in which external military forces intervene and fight in support of at least one of the warring sides, has increased (Pettersson et al., 2019; Pettersson & Öberg, 2020). Many countries or subnational areas facing civil wars have often experienced repeated violence; therefore, conflicts are no longer one-off events but a repeated cycle. Second, the average length of displacement for refugees who cross internationally recognized borders is now estimated at 20 to 25 years (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019; UNHCR & Global Monitoring Report, 2016), yet international aid architecture and professionals who respond to such evolving conflicts have been set up for either stable development or one-off crisis contexts (S. E. L. Bengtsson, 2011).

In the field of EiE, especially at earlier stages before the mid-90s, education had been viewed as leading to largely neutral or positive outcomes (Burde et al., 2017). More scholars have described the complex relationship between education and conflict and the potential negative consequences of education in crises since Bush and Saltarelli's (2000) seminal study *Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict*. Scholarly work about the complex relationship between education and conflict has been primarily done by academics, the goal generally having been to delineate the complex relationship between education and crisis while calling for more than a dualistic notion in order to explain the complexity (Bellino & Williams, 2017; Davies, 2011; King, 2011; Seitz, 2004; Williams, 2004). Understanding nuance in this context is essential because causes of a conflict often include both the root cause and more proximate causes. The following section reviews

policy and programming approaches in the field of EiE.

Policy and Programming Approaches in the EiE Field.

In the EiE field, based on the diverse humanitarian and development actors' understanding of the crises, their mandates, and approaches, the following three approaches for education policy and programming have been prominent: the humanitarian approach, the development approach, and the security approach (Dryden-Peterson, 2016; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013). For each approach, I delineate paradigms that underpin international development theories, perspectives on types of crisis response, and applicable stages in the EiE field. A more recent EiE policy and programming approach that has gained interest is the resilience approach, which is also described below.

First, the humanitarian approach involves education as a sector within the multisectoral acute emergency phase of response to a crisis. This approach protects against human rights violations and abuse and inherently focuses on short-term responses. Modern humanitarianism, understood as an "attempt to alleviate the suffering of distant strangers" (Barnett, 2014, p. 243), originated in the work of Henry Dunant during the Battle of Solferino and the founding of the International Committee of Red Cross in 1863 (Ferris, 2011; Walker & Maxwell, 2009). Humanitarian aid or humanitarian action is often referred to as "delivery of emergency relief/assistance and protection in times of crisis" (DuBois, 2018, p. 2) with the commitment to the four core principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence (Barnett, 2011; Ferris, 2011). Education in this context has been regarded as life-saving and life-sustaining education projects implemented mainly by the international humanitarian aid community with limited coordination with national–local education authorities (Dryden-Peterson,

2016). The protective role of education is often conceptualized as a human right that has been affirmed by international humanitarian law, human rights law, and refugee law (Dryden-Peterson, 2016; Ferris, 2011).

Within the humanitarian approach, Barnett (2011, 2014) distinguished between two strands of humanitarian agencies— emergency humanitarianism and alchemical humanitarianism. Organizations falling under the former are those that focus on more urgent symptoms of emergencies with commitment to the four core humanitarian principles and the traditional life-saving sectors: food and nutrition, water and sanitation, shelter, and health. Those in the latter camp are interested in addressing the root causes of suffering in addition to saving lives, allowing education to be viewed as a means to provide protection to children (Barnett, 2014; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013). Both strands of humanitarianism have coexisted from the outset, but alchemical humanitarianism expanded in the 1990s with changes to the context of emergencies as well as the humanitarian community's increased interest in the protection of children after the ground-breaking 1996 Machel Report—*The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children*—and the acknowledgment of education as one of the core sectors of humanitarian aid (Dryden-Peterson, 2016; Ferris, 2011; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013).

The second approach used in education policy and programming in the EiE field is the development approach. Its proponents often consider education as an important institution for economic development and poverty reduction. This line of thought became more prevalent after the mid-1990s as the field of EiE was increasingly considered a crucial space in achieving EFA, MDGs, and now the SDGs. The approach often takes a long-term view of education and focuses on providing quality education opportunities for

children with national ministries of education usually taking the lead on the initiatives. Despite a growing understanding and consensus across scholarship that human well-being is multidimensional and that poverty and inequality must be understood from interdisciplinary perspectives, modernization theory in sociology (DeYoung, 1989; Inkeles & Smith, 1974) and human capital theory in economics (Psacharopoulos, 2014) constituted the dominant liberal capitalist paradigm (McCowan, 2015, p. 35) in the broader field of international development.

The overlap between the humanitarian approach and the development approach in EiE policies as conflicts has become protracted as noted above; furthermore, the number of fragile contexts has increased. One example of such overlap was noted as the GPE expanded its support of fragile states (Dryden-Peterson, 2016). From this perspective the role of education has been generally understood to be aligned with the human development–capabilities framework in which the empowerment of individuals through education is described as crucial in expanding capabilities for human development. The approach has often drawn on the work of Amartya Sen, who emphasized education as a human right and the equal and fair distribution of opportunities in education even in times of crises (McCowan, 2015).

The third approach is the security-oriented approach, which became prevalent after the September 11, 2001, attack on the United States. In this approach the major focus is on state building and peacebuilding in weak states or states with fragility, framed often in terms of the interest of strong Western states' national security interest (Kirk, 2011; Novelli, 2013; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013). The role of education was conceptualized as building tolerance, peace, and other positive traits that would be

necessary to educate and equip modern citizens with the tools needed to resist joining terrorist groups—especially in Muslim majority countries—to prevent children growing up in radical Islam (Mundy & Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Novelli, 2013). This theoretical assumption aligned with the modernization theory, which explained schools as essential mechanisms in teaching "commonly accepted norms in highly industrial cultures" (DeYong, 1989, p. 97). Western governments have increased their involvement in education, therefore, blurring humanitarian–development assistance and peacekeeping–security efforts in the Global South. With the increasing perception of the broader international development and the humanitarian community potentially contributing to Western governments' interest, education has increasingly been used as a means for peacebuilding and state building in such contexts (Lischer, 2007; Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008).

In addition, traditionally used as an approach for disaster risk reduction (Winthrop & Matsui, 2013), the resilience approach has become increasingly popular among global policy actors. Scholars researching resilience have described the term's "conceptual malleability" and "ambiguity" as features facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration (Brand & Jax, 2007; Juncos, 2018; Wagner & Anholt, 2016). Although the definition of resilience varies depending on disciplines and onto-epistemological foundations, the classical understanding of resilience has been based on a biological, ecological definition, that is, the "ability of a system to absorb disturbance and still retain its basic function and structure" (Walker & Salt, 2006, p. 1). Building on ecological thinking, critical and post-structural approaches to resilience expand the ecological conception of resilience to one with stronger emphasis on dynamic subject-object relationship, complexity governance as

a non-linear process, agency, and learning from failure (Chandler, 2014; Juncos, 2018). For example, resilience in this perspective can be defined as an "interactive process of relational adaptation" (Chandler, 2014, p. 7). In development and humanitarian aid, the resilience approach is understood as an aid pardigm shift from giving to empowerment toward sustainability and self-reliance in preparing for future crises (Hilhorst, 2018; Shah, 2019). In the EiE field, Shah et al. (2020) found the increased use of resilience only after 2010, but in a narrow meaning of individualized skills and attributes to learn and acquire instead of focusing on self-reflexive and transformative system-level approach. The following section specifically deals with evidence of SEL in the Global South more broadly, including crisis-affected contexts.

Empirical Evidence and a Critique of SEL in the Global South

In organizing the research and practice of SEL in the Global South, I classify evidence into the following two categories: (a) research using problem- solving theory and (b) research using the critical theory approach (Dale, 2005; Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008; Pherali, 2019). The problem-solving theory focuses on a particular problem to generate solutions; however, in critical theory the problem is understood in a much broader context and system (Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008). In Dale's (2005) terms, I conceptualized the first body of research in which scholars asked education questions pertaining to the educational practice. In problem-solving theory, questions on educational practices are examined, such as who is taught what by whom. In the second type of research, the critical theory approach is used to seek answers to education questions relevant to the politics of education and education politics as well as the relationship of education and other sectors and scales (Dale, 2005).

Research Using Problem-Solving Theory

Most of the empirical evidence and theoretical critique of SEL in the EiE field reflects the instrumental view and describes improving practices using the problem-solving approach. In low-resource or post-conflict contexts, SEL and PSS programs traditionally emphasized the role of physical, psychosocial, and cognitive protection in the lives of students and teachers and not so much its relation to academic outcomes from a child protection perspective (Burde et al., 2017). Researchers have reported a positive impact of the interventions on children's social–emotional development and psychosocial well-being (Kostelny & Wessells, 2008; Pisani et al., 2016; Winthrop & Kirk, 2011) and on the caring and supportive school culture or environment (Aber et al., 2016; Randolph et al., 2019). Although rare, one showed the positive impact of a mental health intervention on longer-term education outcomes for war-affected youth in Sierra Leone. Betancourt et al. (2014) found that treatment with 10 sessions of cognitive–behavioral therapy-based group mental health interventions had a positive and lasting psychosocial impact on adolescents and positive impact on school retention, school attendance, and classroom behavior.

More recent researchers have increasingly examined SEL and related programs' impact on academic outcomes, using the randomized controlled trial design in the Global South. To improve the current SEL practice in the Global South, humanitarian actors have increased investments in practice-oriented research to identify causal mechanisms between SEL and education outcomes, including academic performance, general well-being, and behavioral outcomes of an individual SEL intervention. Such findings are, however, somewhat inconclusive as to the impact of SEL in various contexts.

In crisis-affected contexts in the Global South, IRC has attempted to connect SEL skills to academic and psychosocial outcomes; but the results have been mixed across countries. For example, IRC's program in the Democratic Republic of Congo, focusing on providing quality scaffolded teacher training to enrich teachers' classroom management and reading and math instruction, resulted in improved geometry scores, a marginal increase in reading scores, and no impact on numeracy scores (Aber et al., 2017; Torrente et al., 2019). In Niger, IRC found little or no impact on children's social emotional outcomes after 22 weeks of targeted mindfulness and brain games and called for context-appropriate and culturally sensitive SEL programs (Kim et al., 2019). Similarly, in Lebanon, Arabic, math, and second language instruction for a half year twice a week with mindfulness interventions improved the reading and math skills of Syrian refugee students attending second shift schools. No additional impact was shown on academic performance or mental health outcomes in a group of students who received additional skill-targeted SEL interventions in the second year (Dolan & Weiss-Yogonda, 2017; Weiss-Yagoda, 2021).

Research Using the Critical Theory Approach

In the field of EiE, a field born of practice and policy instead of established theoretical frameworks, researchers have inherently desired to improve practice through research; therefore, finding limited evidence of SEL research using the critical theory approach is not surprising. Although research on SEL from the critical theory approach in the Global South was limited, I begin with scholarly work in the broad field of EiE before narrowing down to SEL. EiE research in this category has been primarily done by academics studying identity, inclusion, and social cohesion, a more broadly defined field

of social and emotional learning in post-conflict societies and for refugees in protracted situations. Research has been conducted to illuminate the complex relationship between history and civics education in post-conflict societies (Bellino & Williams, 2017; Williams, 2004) and in refugee education policy appropriation in different contexts (Dryden-Peterson, 2011, 2016; Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019). One piece of the recent theory-generated research in the field of EiE using a framework of critical cultural political economy was the "4Rs" framework, but this was also applied only to textbook analysis and more broadly to the context analysis of post-conflict countries (Novelli et al., 2017).

As discussed, SEL researchers studying programming and pedagogical approaches implemented in formal and NFE settings in the Global South have mostly used the problem-solving theory approach as opposed to the critical theory approach. Research conducted from the critical theory perspective typically did not focus on assessing the impact of an intervention but critiqued some of the assumptions and approaches current SEL and related program have taken. To categorize the scholarly works using the critical theory approach more comprehensively, I included theoretical and empirical works critiquing SEL and related policy and programs in both the Global South and Global North. As a result, three groups were identified: (a) perspectives of social justice education, (b) scholars assuming a culturalist perspective based on anthropology or cross-cultural psychology, and (c) critical policy scholars.

Perspective of Social Justice Education

In social justice and liberatory education traditions, mainstream SEL is too technocratic and its interventionist approach may exacerbate unequal educational

outcomes for marginalized children. Although not squarely a product of SEL scholarship, critical peace education, human rights education, global citizenship education, and education for social justice have been theorized further than SEL from a social justice and equity perspective, yielding insights into socially just and transformative SEL. Critical peace education scholars, influenced by the Freirean conception of critical pedagogy and a broader critical theory tradition, have theorized the role of human agency and local context that interacts with structural forms of violence (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016; Hantzopoulos et al., 2021).

The group of critical peace educators provided ethnographic evidence centering students' voice and experiences, indicating the potential role of diverse critical peace education approaches in school settings, and situated schools as a potential site of transformation as well as social reproduction. For example, Zakharia (2017) elaborated an anti-oppression pedagogy implemented as a whole-school approach at a Lebanese community-school, and Bajaj (2009) described the effectiveness of an alternative human values education at an NGO-run school in Zambia. Both researchers demonstrated how the critical peace education approaches fostered transformative agency. Similarly, Hantzopoulos (2011) depicted New York City public schools' mainstreaming of peace and social justice principles in their school cultures. Centering the notion of student agency across these critical education approaches, Bajaj (2018) found common tenets of so-called liberatory education, peace education, human rights education, and social justice education, including (a) contextually relevant curricula–pedagogy, (b) deep analysis of social inequalities, (c) critical consciousness, and (d) the cultivation of transformative agency.

In addition, although not part of the main thrust of the critique of SEL in the Global South, concerns and criticisms have arisen over SEL's compatibility with minority population in the US or the UK. In the US scholars have raised concerns that SEL taught without broader sociopolitical context may exacerbate racism and inequalities. Apple (2013b) criticized the claim of the neutrality of education for its reduction to a set of skills and how to's that could actually depoliticize the study of social life by failing to situate individuals in larger social, economic, and cultural contexts. Similarly, criticizing the apolitical, skills-building focused SEL approach as hegemonic miseducation, Camangian and Cariaga (2021) emphasized the need for critical consciousness, anti-colonial, and humanistic approaches to SEL by attending to the oppressive structures. Scholars have argued the need for culturally responsive SEL programs for minority populations in the United States (Castro-Olivo & Merrell, 2012; Simmons, 2019; Slaten et al., 2015). In responding to the critique, transformative SEL was introduced "to mitigate the educational, social, and economic inequities that derive from the interrelated legacies of racialized cultural oppression in the United States and globally" by emphasizing a justice-oriented citizenship that will address power and ideology (Jagers et al., 2019, p. 163).

Culturalist Perspective

Studies and program models implemented in the Global South as well as those with minority populations in the Global North have been criticized for their basis in ethnocentrism, in which another's cultural practice is considered inferior without appropriate knowledge (Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff et al., 2017). SEL, or more broadly, education programs that promote social, emotional, and behavioral competencies and

skills, were criticized because they normalized and preferred Eurocentric or White, middle-class American culture and values (Denham & Weissberg, 2004; Hoffman, 2009; Simmons, 2019). Rogoff (2003) explained that researchers compared practices and cultures elsewhere, especially in the Global South, to middle-class European American practices and development and applied a deficit perspective in which those practices and development were considered normal.

Historically, the European-based system of formal Western schooling has been seen as a vital tool for civilizing, where such practices and values were taught and learned (Rogoff, 2003; Betancourt et al., 2014). Scholars have emphasized the difference between individualistic and collectivist culture (Hecht & Shin, 2015) and found little or inconsistent impact of SEL interventions in the United States (Slaten et al., 2015). Recent studies conducted in rural Tanzania (Jukes et al., 2018) and in Ghana (Jeong, 2019) were examples of the relatively few empirical studies available on the Global South, which challenged the assumptions that social and emotional competencies were universal. Both studies showed that the local teachers and parents in Tanzania and Ghana valued social and interpersonal competencies and skills over individual-level skills while the mainstream SEL approaches focused on fostering individual-level skills. Responding to the call for culturally relevant SEL programming to achieve better impact in the Global South, Harvard EASEL Lab recently conducted a design research in Northeast Nigeria, where the researcher reported the detailed process of developing and contextualizing SEL activities with close engagements with 24 teachers (Bailey et al., 2021).

From a culturalist perspective, the skills and competencies most often promoted in SEL or PSS programs around the world have seemed to emphasize the calming or

defusing of emotions through expression of one's emotions; however, this emphasis ignores cultural differences in expression and verbalization of those emotions and the varying roles of adults in children's education and development (Hoffman, 2009). For example, a needs assessment of an SEL by Pencils of Promise in Ghana showed that many students felt uncomfortable discussing their emotions or anxieties with teachers (Kennedy, 2019). Based on empirical evidence regarding posttraumatic stress disorder interventions in the Global South, one study showed incompatibility between mental health practices in the West and many local beliefs and norms on grief. In such interventions, individual-focused counseling with mental health professionals was not found to be as beneficial as in the West because the local population was comfortable sharing and verbalizing their emotions and grief only with close family members and friends (Boothby, 2008; Wessells, 2008).

Critical Policy Perspective

Research on SEL and related education approaches from the critical policy perspective have been either at the theoretical level or focused on the Global North. The critique can be categorized in the following three groups. First, critical education policy scholars have criticized SEL as policy discourse in terms of various related neoliberal global education agenda. For example, a rationalist, instrumental approach to global education policy has regained credibility, leading to a preference for frameworks of economized education measurements, aligning with the education efficiency framework or medicalization of educational research (Verger et al., 2016). The expansion of SEL has come hand in hand with heightened interest in the measurement of SEL skills based on psychoeconomic expertise (Verger, Novelli, Altinyelken, 2018; Williamson, 2019).

Consequently, the associated policy discourse is the preference of a technocratic, objective, and scientific approach to education (Littoz-Monnet, 2015). The strong interest and focus on the measurement of SEL skills was evident in the SEL mapping study conducted in the EiE context of the Global South as well (S. M. Jones et al., 2020). From the perspective of transnational policy mobility, in which scholars have identified SEL as an exemplar of policy assemblage, various actors, technologies, psychology, and statistics all came together and constructed psychodata that makes the program evidence objective, scientific, and apolitical (Ecclestone, 2016; Williamson, 2019).

Second, policy-relevant data and statistical knowledge (Williamson, 2019) is considered crucial for policy decision-making. Organizations, such as OECD, have already begun to measure noncognitive skills, underpinning human capital theory with policy discourse. Global education policy discourses on skills and economic competitiveness have already been documented (Dale & Robertson, 2007; Klees, 2016; Sum & Jessop, 2013). From this perspective, the humanistic value of SEL is reduced to social and emotional skills that would predict socioeconomic outcomes and future employability and capability (Williamson, 2019).

Third, transnational policy-making of SEL can be viewed from the perspective of psychological, behavioral, and therapeutic governance (Ecclestone, 2016; R. Jones et al., 2011). The concept of a policy network (Ball, 2012a) is useful to understand how myriad international organizations, INGOs, local NGOs, and some private sector stakeholders are connected and have contributed to establishing pluri-scalar, multilevel SEL policy-making and governance in a distant context, such as Lebanon. And rather than a complete set of packages of policies and programs adopted by local–national policy implementers

and teachers, discourses and packages of SEL policies and programs are sometimes mutated and surprisingly selectively chosen from the point of view of policy mobilities (Peck & Theodore, 2010). Based on the theoretical foundations of critical policy studies in CIE and EiE literature, I now introduce a conceptual framework for this study, followed by two analytical frameworks focusing on how to operationalize the conceptual framework and theoretical foundations.

Conceptual Framework

With my conceptual framework I intended to connect the theoretical foundations of critical policy studies in CIE and the key policy approaches from EiE.[7] Humanitarian, development, and security approaches— the policy and programming approaches in EiE—inherently overlap in reality, considering (a) the humanitarian approach is short-term and focuses on NFE, (b) the development approach focuses on institution building and the provision of long-term quality education as the context transitions to reconstruction or falls into a protracted crisis; (c) the security-oriented approach focuses on state-building and peace-building in states with fragility but is often framed by Western states' national security interests. Lebanon is a case in which the Syrian refugee crisis is a protracted one that has lasted for more than 10 years and where a financial crisis and COVID-19 pandemic exists. Humanitarian and development actors have, therefore, applied all three EiE policy approaches. Considering the resilience approach is a recent development, I have not included in the visualization.

[7] See Figure 1.

Policy efforts to conceptualize bridging the gap or building coherence between humanitarian action and development cooperation have been in place since the 1980s under a variety of names: linking relief and development (LRRD); linking relief, rehabilitation, and development; relief–development continuum; humanitarian–development double nexus, to name a few (Buchanan-Smith & Maxwell, 1994; Hoevelmann, 2020; Mendenhall, 2014). Earlier concepts, such as LRRD or continuum, were defined with the assumption that conflicts and crises were temporary and short-term and would transition or linearly progress to long-term rehabilitation and then development (Barakat & Milton, 2020; Mendenhall, 2014). Accordingly, humanitarian and development aid actors have had significant differences in the way they conceptualize assistance, how they work, the populations they target, and funding mechanisms (Ferris, 2011; Mendenhall, 2014).

Stated in the previous section *conflict, fragility, and education*, the nature of crises has evolved to be increasingly intrastate, and conflicts are no longer temporary or one-off but repeated. Development and humanitarian aid, of which EiE programming is a small fraction, has been concentrated heavily in conflict-affected or states with fragility. In these contexts, the previous linear progression of crisis from rapid-onset emergency to rehabilitation does not often happen, and inevitably, the three policy and programming approaches reviewed above—the humanitarian approach, the development approach, and the security approach—coexist in the same space. The concept of the triple nexus has met with criticism from international NGOs because of the potentially politically loaded nature of the concept, peace being included in the nexus (Barakat & Milton, 2020; Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, 2019). With peacebuilding, the following must be

determined: (a) whether peace is conceptualized as top-down, a security-oriented liberal approach, or promoting negative peace or (b) whether peace is conceptualized as a bottom-up, everyday experience that tackles root causes of conflict, or positive peace (Fanning & Fullwood-Thomas, 2019). An expectation is that the humanitarian–development–peace nexus is fundamentally different from earlier concepts like LRRD or continuum, but little progress has been made in programming and further developing the research. The humanitarian–development–peace nexus has, therefore, been useful in documenting how SEL policy-making and education reform transitioned from a primarily humanitarian approach to a development approach in the context of Lebanon's overall aid architecture as the Syrian refugee crisis became protracted.

The humanitarian–development–peace nexus, or triple nexus, and New Way of Working (NWOW) are the international aid actors' most recent policy commitments to strengthen coherence among humanitarian aid, development aid, and peacebuilding efforts. They were first used by United Nations (UN) Secretary General António Guterres in 2017 (International Council of Voluntary Agencies, 2017), and that the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD adopted the Recommendations on the Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus in 2019 (Center on International Cooperation, 2019). The nexus is directly linked to humanitarian governance (Barnett, 2011; Barnett & Duvall, 2005), where and how humanitarian actors operate to produce and formulate humanitarian and development policies and programs as well as ideological discourses. Governance of education in fragile or conflict-affected contexts are complex because they operate in a web of development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding actors. Barnett and Duvall (2005) expanded the concept of power beyond the interaction among actors in

the system by adding productive power (which describes how global institutions reproduce the global class structure), American hegemony, and global discourses, such as human rights. The governance of humanitarianism "should not be treated as a coherent whole but rather as a concept in motion that has several enduring tensions" (Barnett, 2011, p. 21).

Various efforts were made to better operate in the humanitarian–development–peace nexus with (slightly) newly imagined humanitarian governance or humanitarian architecture (DuBois, 2018) or an international humanitarian system (Walker & Maxwell, 2009). New approaches to operate better in the nexus have been articulated as resiliency humanitarianism (Ilcan & Rygiel, 2015), developmental humanitarianism (Pasha, 2020), and new humanitarianism (DuBois, 2018; Fox, 2002). Increasingly, critical reflection on the very Western-oriented hegemonic nature of global humanitarian governance has been noted in this group of scholarly work, aiming to rescope the work of the system. The paternalistic nature of Western aid governance has been criticized, (e.g., Bennett, 2012), yet undoing the system is not yet in sight.

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) first depicts these three approaches—humanitarian, development, and peace—as policy and programming in EiE to map out the discourses related to SEL relevant to the second research question: How are discourses on SEL similar or different at the global, national, local levels, and how have they evolved over time? I then framed these EiE policy approaches, using the CPE framework. The horizontal axis in Figure 1 indicates the evolution of the discourses over time and facilitates an understanding of how and the extent to which SEL discourse and practices have evolved from a humanitarian approach to one focusing on development

and peace in the intersections of the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. Considering both semiosis and material factors, I presupposed the initial phase of the humanitarian response would be influenced more by discourses without clear structural constraints. As the crisis became protracted, however, and with SEL entering into the formal education space, I assumed the discourse would change to more of a development approach.

Applying the conceptual framework, I situated multiple norms, values, and ideological foundations of SEL from policy discourses and actions and events in Lebanon and globally. In understanding the processes of how SEL became a prominent national policy, I hoped to make sense of how each approach and concept—humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding—take up the relevant discourses. The conceptual framework centered on how research participants describe problems and aims related to SEL and how the concepts and ideologies work together as the leaders of Lebanon consider longer-term curriculum reform, of which SEL framework is a part. The following section explains the analytical framework, how the conceptual framework and the theoretical foundations are operationalized in analyzing the data.

Analytical Framework 1: CPE Approach—Three Evolutionary Mechanisms

In operationalizing the conceptual framework and theoretical foundations, I applied two analytical frameworks from CPE approach. Drawing on the broad praxis of the critical political economy, CPE analysis incorporates the cultural processes of sense- and meaning-making to economic and political relations (Higgins & Novelli, 2020; Sum & Jessop, 2013). Inspired by the Marxian critique of political economy, Foucauldian discourse analysis, and the Gramscian concept of hegemony, adherents of CPE have

theorized how complexity is reduced through sense- and meaning-making (semiosis) and through instituted economic and political relations and social embeddings (structuration) (Jessop, 2010; Sum, 2009; Sum & Jessop, 2013). They reject the idea of a universal, causality-based understanding of the complex world and assertion of complete knowledge from a critical–realist standpoint (Sum & Jessop, 2013).

The concept of culture is not consistent in the scholarship. In the field of education, Robertson and Dale (2015) applied it in explaining the education-centered ensemble of cultural, political, and economic views of education. In conflict-affected contexts, Novelli et al. (2017) have used the framework to understand the relationship between education and peacebuilding in cultural, economic, and political relations in a society. Jessop's (2004, 2010) approach to CPE analysis placed emphasis on semiosis and its articulation within the wider economic, political, and social formation in defining the "cultural turn." Robertson and Dale (2015) delineated the cultural as civilization projects, including Western modernity, Confucianism, and Islam, refuting Jessop's focus on discourse or semiotics as a reduction. Despite slight variations of focus, both perspectives may be useful depending on the research questions and the type of research methodology a researcher undertakes.

The first CPE analytical framework I used in Chapter 4 was the three evolutionary mechanisms—variation, selection, and retention (Jessop, 2010; Sum & Jessop, 2013). The categorization of the evolutionary mechanisms of variation, selection, and retention was used to systematically analyze factors that have shaped the SEL–PSS policy adoption in Lebanon. The use of "evolutionary mechanism" was not meant to convey "pre-determined sequences that entail evolutionism" (Jessop, 2010, p. 340). Linear or

universal paths or stages of policy development constituted the very assumption I intended to challenge and resist in the findings of this research. The evolutionary mechanism was intended to delineate the role of semiotic and material factors in policy adoption and formulation phases.

The first mechanism to understand the policy adoption is the variation phase, likely triggered by crises that allow emergence and proliferation in interpretation and proposed solutions. From the perspective of CPE, crises are never purely objective, extrasemiotic moments, allowing some changing mix of semiotic and nonsemiotic factors, actors, and forces and serving as an opportunity for some decisive interventions (Jessop, 2010). This phase prepares the "cultural and social ground for crisis-induced strategic interventions," and "actors deliberately or unintentionally redefine the sites, subjects, and stakes of action and articulate and experiment with innovative strategies, tactics, projects, and visions" (Jessop, 2010, p. 347).

The second mechanism is selection, the phase in which only certain innovations are selected, those that are more plausible and resonate with the affected population (Jessop, 2010). Many factors can contribute to the selection, including powerful actors, media, or other economic orders. The third mechanism is retention, the phase in which some innovations are subsequently institutionalized. The three evolutionary mechanisms of variation, selection, and retention were used to understand the evolution of macro factors, actors, and discourses in influencing the SEL policy adoption over time. In the next section, I will discuss the second analytical framework, the four modes of selectivities.

Analytical Framework 2: CPE Approach— Four Modes of Selectivities

In this research SEL—included and drafted into the national education policy and child protection policy, for example—could be those few retained education policies. The process of how this occurs can be further described and analyzed through the four selectivities. Because I was particularly interested in exploring how problems and solutions associated with SEL are privileged and selected by social agents in developing it into a nationally agreed-upon framework, Sum and Jessop's (2013) four modes of selectivities served as a useful analytical framework in understanding the process involving semiotics and structuration. The four modes of selectivity in social relations are structural selectivity, discursive selectivity, technological selectivity, and agential selectivity, together constituting heuristic schema for the CPE approach in analyzing complex social realities (Sum & Jessop, 2013). In the field of CIE, Higgins and Novelli (2020) applied the four selectivities as an analytic framework in examining a peace education curriculum used in Sierra Leone; however, to the best of my knowledge, the four modes of selectivity in social relations (Sum & Jessop, 2013) have not been used as an analytical framework for examining an education policy formation process itself beyond an investigation of a specific curriculum.

According to Sum and Jessop (2013) selectivity draws on critical realism to facilitate an understanding of reality as a reduction of the complexity. Through sense-making and structuration, "the social and natural world becomes relatively meaningful and orderly for actors" and "many other possible meanings are thereby excluded, as are many other possible social worlds" (p. 149). In Sum and Jessop's (2013) terms, complexities are reduced through four interrelated selectivities. First, structural selectivity refers to the "impact of political and economic processes and the relative

power of institutions" in determining which social relations and meanings are privileged over others (Higgins & Novelli, 2020, p. 7). It is grounded in the "contested reproduction of basic social forms, for example, capital relations, nature-society relations, racism, patriarchy" (Sum & Jessop, 2013, p. 218). The process of structuration privileges some actors, identities, ideals, material interests, and strategies over others given the structural–relational approach upon which the framework is based.

The second form of selectivity is discursive selectivity, which entails unbalanced opportunities and constraints associated with particular discourses, focusing on "semiotic resources that limit what can be imagined, who is authorized to elaborate specific opportunities and constraints as [related to the] intertextual, interdiscursive and contextual field" (Sum & Jessop, 2013, p. 215). Because the real world is complex and cannot be fully observed, the social and natural worlds are reduced and selectively recognized through meaning-making systems of relevant actors. Discursive selectivity "frame[s] lived experiences, limit[s] perceived actions, and shape[s] domination and social contestation" (Sum & Jessop, 2013, p. 149). Although numerous variations of discourses define strategies, projects, and visions, only some semiotic innovations are selected; and investigating the mechanisms through which those selection processes occur can be one of the research agenda under discursive selectivity.

Third, technological selectivities are related to the Foucauldian concept of power–knowledge and object–subject formation (Sum & Jessop, 2013). They can be used to explain how subject–object positions are selected, limit choice, and regulate bodies and thoughts. They are grounded in the notion that technologies "shape choices, capacities to act, distribute resources and harms, convey legitimacy through technical rationality and

effectivity" (Sum & Jessop, 2013, p. 219). The last component of the framework is agential selectivity, which refers to the "differential capacity of agents to engage in structurally oriented strategic calculation" (Sum & Jessop, 2013, p. 219). Agential selectivity depends on the differences specific actors make in the selection of a particular policy based on their power and capacities. Based on the definitions described above, the four modes of selectivities were applied in conducting the critical analysis of policy adoption and formulation process of SEL in Lebanon. Each form of selectivity was applied in analyzing the national SEL policy-making process, as relevant, in Chapter 6.

Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, I have reviewed relevant literature in the two fields related to the proposed study before introducing the conceptual framework and the analytical frameworks. First, I described the three key tenets of critical education policy studies as theoretical framing of SEL policy production in Lebanon. After explaining the three key tenets, I introduced SEL as a traveling global education policy model. The mainstream global education policy condition emphasizing social efficiency was introduced as a context in which SEL has risen as a privileged global solution. Then, four exemplary definitions and frameworks of social and emotional competencies and skills as well as theories underpinning SEL were reviewed.

Subsequently, background on the field of EiE was summarized. I provided an overview of the EiE field, a brief history of the field, theoretical and empirical literature on the relationship between conflict, fragility, and education policy approaches in the field before introducing empirical evidence on SEL in the Global South and a critique of the existing evidence on SEL. Based on the review of the literature I found a critical gap

in the SEL research using the critical theory approach in the Global South. Relevant insights were drawn from the literature in social justice and liberatory education traditions and culturalists in the Global South as well as SEL research from a critical policy perspective in the Global North.

I then provided an overview of the conceptual framework, connecting the theoretical foundations of critical policy studies in CIE and the key policy approaches from EiE—humanitarian, development, and security approaches. The conceptual framework also describes the evolution of the discourses over time and facilitates understanding how and the extent to which SEL discourse and practices have evolved from a humanitarian approach to one focusing on development and peace in the intersections of the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. After that, a more detailed description of the two CPE analytical frameworks, which operationalize the conceptual and theoretical frameworks, is introduced. Based on the literature in the multiple fields of the research, I delineate the research design of this study in the following chapter.

Chapter 3. Methods

In this Chapter, I explain my research design and methodology and describe data collection methods as well as the process of data analysis. I also discuss my epistemological foundations of the study, trustworthiness and transferability, limitations of the study, and researcher positionality. The intent of the study was to examine national SEL–PSS policy-making processes in Lebanon, focusing on the complex web of local, national, and transnational actors' interaction, power, and discourses. To adequately document the SEL policy-making processes in terms of the perspectives and interests of policy actors across multiple scales and different types of educational settings in Lebanon, I adopted CCS methodology (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). This chapter opens with a reiteration of my purpose and research questions. I then describe my epistemological foundation to justify the research design. The discussion is followed by a description of the research design and how I employed CCS methodology in greater detail. I then introduce the data collection and sampling methods of this research, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and secondary qualitative data in turn. After doing so, data analysis steps are illustrated in detail to establish the rigor of my research processes. Finally, I discuss issues relevant to validity, limitations of the study, and my reflection as a researcher.

Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of the study was to examine the complex processes and mechanisms invoked in formulating SEL and PSS as national policies, focusing on the role that policy actors at multiple levels have played. The research also traced SEL and related terms across multiple scales and across time with the intention of illuminating the power

dynamics defining and disseminating SEL and related discourses. This study was designed to explore the following research questions:

1. What were the processes by which SEL developed into national education policies in Lebanon since the Syrian refugee influx? And in particular, how and why did transnational–national actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors influence the institutionalization of national SEL policies?
2. How are discourses on SEL similar or different at the global, national, and local levels; and how have they evolved over time?

   (a) What are the similarities and differences in the conceptualization of SEL (in the policy texts and in discussion) by transnational–national policy actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors?

   (b) How have the problems SEL was intended to address evolved over time?

Epistemological Foundation of the Study

My epistemology is based in constructionism, whose proponents hold that truth comes into existence based on human engagement with the realities in the world and that people may construct meaning in different ways (Crotty, 1998). In this epistemology, which has been described as a "conceptual and epistemological bricoleur," I am influenced by multiple paradigms, including critical theory and postcolonial approaches when looking at any particular problem (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 45). Taking a critical theory perspective (Apple, 2013b; Creswell, 2013; Kincheloe, 2008), I am concerned with the dominant and multiple forms of political, social, and institutional power and structures that oppress and marginalize the teaching and educational experiences of educators and students. The perspective of critical and postcolonial

scholars is relevant because they view the field of CIE as contributing to the colonial legacy by explicitly and implicitly imposing Eurocentric Western education models, norms, and ideologies on the Global South (Said, 1979/2003; Sriprakash et al., 2019; Takayama et al., 2017; Tikly, 2004). I am particularly interested in research related to the perspectives of the research participants in the Global South that could challenge homogenizing education approaches and discourses.

In examining the influence of global education policy in the Global South, I assume the perspective of critical constructivism in that I am interested in the role of "intersubjective ideas, norms, knowledge, belief" and particularly how these ideas are socially constructed by powerful actors (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 392). Unlike those who espouse the rationalist approach to policy, I do not believe policy-makers adopt policies based on neutral and objective evidence but on complex mechanisms that mobilize policy ideas enabling policy actors' perceptions and beliefs that certain policies work (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Sum & Jessop, 2013; Verger, 2016). The critical constructivist perspective on policy closely relates to the perspective of cultural political economy, in which ideational factors and material factors both influence policy-makers' decision to adopt policies. Thus, I am interested in establishing the critical realists' understanding of "local causality that discovers actors' reasoning, circumstances in specific contexts, and actual events that led to specific policy outcomes" through my critical policy research (Maxwell, 2012, p. 37).

Nevertheless, a sociocultural perspective in policy studies has been also influential in crystallizing my interest in and understanding of global education policy (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). Influenced by the aforementioned

postcolonial perspective, I am particularly interested in how global policies influence local communities. Instead of accepting the culture or context as a fixity, I believe community and culture are fluid, socioculturally and historically constructed, and heterogenous (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992, p. 8). I avoided assuming rationalist, instrumentalist perspectives on examining the globalizing social and emotional learning programming and policy in the Global South; thus, this study was designed to reflect my multiple epistemological paradigms and perspectives stated above.

Description of Research Design and Methodology

Based on my epistemological grounding in constructionism and my interest in examining the complexities of the SEL policy formation processes on multiple scales as a critical constructivist, I chose a CCS methodology to answer the research questions. Because my intention was to understand how and why SEL as a global policy discourse or a program model was adopted as national policy initiatives in Lebanon, the emergent and iterative characteristics of the CCS methodology were most appropriate to "attend simultaneously to global, national, and local dimensions of case-based research" (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p. 1). I "followed" SEL as a policy discourse and idea as it traveled across global, national, and local scales to understand how the SEL policies and programs in Lebanon were socially, politically, and discursively constructed by actors, events, and factors on multiple scales (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017).

Aligned with the theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning this study, the CCS approach was well-suited to (a) examining local–national–global relationships by decentering the nation-state; (b) tracing relevant "factors, actors, and features" to explore the cultural production of policy at multiple scales instead of a priori bounding

the case (p. 39); and (c) taking a critical theoretical stance and therefore to assessing power and inequality in the social world (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). The emergent and process-oriented approach enabled me to focus on the meanings and influences of actors, events, and activities not bounded by the a priori defined time and place bounded system of traditional case study methodology (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2003).

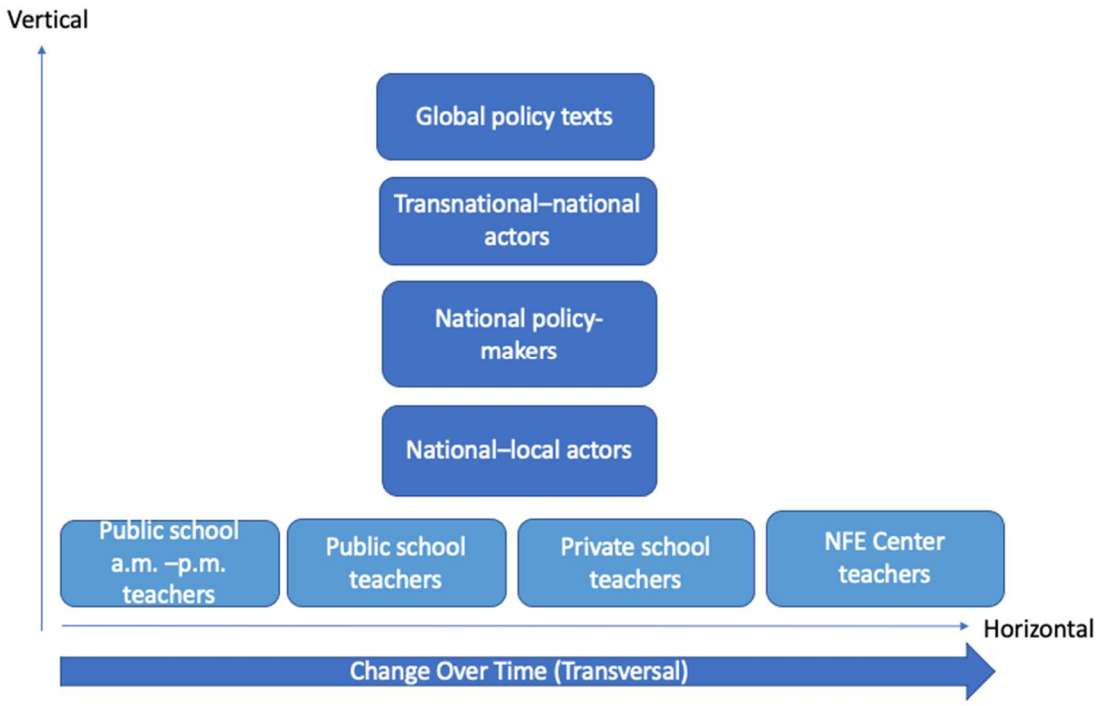
The CCS research design of this study is visualized in Figure 2 below, which also affected how I present my findings in Chapters 4 and 5. My research "traced people and connection across space and time" to delineate national SEL policy-making in Lebanon (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p.17). I sought to make all three comparisons according to the CCS approach: horizontal, vertical, and transversal. First, I conducted a *horizontal comparison* across four different types of teachers: (a) public school teachers at both first shift (Lebanese) and second shift (Syrian refugees) schools; (b) public school teachers of Lebanese students[8]; (c) private school teachers of Lebanese students, and (d) teachers at NFE centers of only Syrian refugee students. Teachers were positioned as future SEL policy implementers, and teachers' conceptualization of SEL and their expectations with implementing previous national education policies were juxtaposed against one another. Second, I also made a *vertical comparison*. Not confined to global, national, and local levels, I focused on dynamic interactions among actors, discourses, and events across multi-scalar sociopolitical contexts in comparing vertically (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). I used the term "vertical" cautiously, not to reinforce the binary notion of global as macro structures and local as micro agents but as policy networks traveling across levels and

[8] In both (b) and (c), there are some non-Lebanese students in both first shift public schools and private schools.

scales (Ball, 2012a, 2016; see also Robertson, 2018). Finally, a *transversal comparison* was mainly made by incorporating historical analysis. This perspective is reflected in the historization of the national SEL–PSS policy-making in Lebanon in Chapter 4 (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017).

Figure 2

CCS Approach to National SEL Policy-Making in Lebanon



Note. Adapted from Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p. 3.

To further represent the fluidity of my research participants' interactions across multiple scales, I reconfigured the vertical axis of the CCS methodology by choosing to use the conjoining terms to represent my research participants. Instead of using traditionally predetermined levels of grouping of global, national, and local policy actors, I decided to use the conjoining terms, "transnational–national actors" and "national–local

actors" to establish vertical linkages across global, national, and local levels (Kwauk, 2014, p. 36). So doing, I intended to better reflect policy actors' varying perspective, experiences, and locations at multiple scales more realistically, because many of the research participants did not neatly fit into my original global or national categories (e.g., Lebanese education experts working at INGO headquarters and non-Lebanese education experts working at multilateral organizations' Lebanon office).

To answer my research question with the CCS design, 48 semi-structured interviews with policy actors at multiple scales, document analysis, and five semi-structured interview transcripts were used as secondary data. Each of the data collection methods is described in detail in the following section.

Case Study Context: Lebanon

This section provides the background of the case study context, Lebanon. First, a brief history of conflict in Lebanon is introduced, particularly in relation to the Syrian conflict. Then, the education system and major education reform initiatives in Lebanon since 2011 are reviewed with a focus on education reform efforts related to addressing the Syrian crisis.

A Brief History of Conflict in Lebanon and Current Multi-faceted Crises

Lebanon's economy suffered substantial deficits for a long period of time and since the Syrian crisis low economic growth as well with "debt-to-GDP . . . estimated to have reached 174 percent by the end of 2020, increasing by 3 pp from the 2019 ratio" (World Bank Group Middle East and North Africa Region, 2021, p. 7). Lebanon was ranked the fifth highest in central government debt-to-GDP ratio in the world (International Monetary Fund [IMF], 2020), and the inflation rate had risen sharply from

10% in January 2020 to 157.9% in March 2021 (World Bank, 2020; World Bank Group Middle East and North Africa Region, 2021, p. 12). As of June 2020, the country filed for the default of a $1.2 billion Eurobond in March 2020, the first in its history (Azhari, 2020; Sly, 2020). The financial crisis had a catastrophic social impact on the population in Lebanon: One in five Lebanese and Palestinians and 44% of Syrian refugees had only one meal the previous day (World Food Programme, 2020, p. 3). The largest antigovernment protest in more than a decade had been running across the country since October 2019 as a result of frustration about the government's corruption and failure to provide basic services, including power, internet connection, and safe drinking water on top of all-time high economic hardships (British Broadcasting Company, 2020).

Historically, Lebanon has been vulnerable because of regional and national religious and political conflicts. With the end of the French Mandate in 1943, Lebanon's confessional democracy[9] or laissez-faire policies officially began, but the roots of its sectarianism, "the deployment of religious heritage as a primary marker of modern political identity," has a much longer history than nineteenth-century Ottoman Lebanon (Makdisi, 2000, p. 7). Following the French Mandate (1920–1943), the National Pact of 1943 institutionalized the confessional–consociational[10] democracy, which requires a Maronite Christian President, a Sunni Muslim Prime Minister, a Shi'a Muslim Speaker of Parliament, and 6:5 ratio of Christian to Muslim Parliament members, based on the 1932 census (Hanft, 2015; Zakharia, 2011).

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[9] "Confessionalism" is a system of government that proportionally allocates political power among a country's communities, whether religious or ethnic, according to their percentage of the population; it is a term derived from "consociationalism" (Harb, 2006).

[10] "Consociationalism" refers to a "fragmented but stable political system, in which all groups have equitable representation" (Haddad, 2009, p. 399).

Although sectarianism has almost always been criticized as the cause of multiple armed conflicts, this simplistic perspective on religious sectarianism would not be enough to challenge the status quo (Weiss, 2009). Instead, its complex relationship and interplay with political, economic, cultural, and social factors in the everyday lives of Lebanese need to be traced. Zakharia (2008) stated that religious sectarianism has been "deployed paradoxically for secular purposes that are political, socioeconomic, and ultimately in the service of power" (p. 10). Tensions grew as Christians disproportionately became the majority in all areas of state systems and led to the War of 1958. Most notably, this contentious political system led to the devastating Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990), but the cause of the conflict was complex (Betts et al., 2017; van Vliet & Hourani, 2014; Zakharia, 2011). The unresolved grievance from the Civil War, spatial inequalities, and regional dynamics all contributed to more recent conflicts. Lebanon lived through military occupation and invasion by Israel and Syria. Israel occupied South Lebanon for 22 years before leaving in 2000, and Syria intervened in Lebanon until 2005 for nearly 15 years, during which time the "status of Lebanese political leaders from all factions was dependent on good relations with Syrian military officers and with Damascus" (Picard & Ramsbotham, 2012, p. 72).

The Syrian conflict, which began in 2011, has had not only a significant impact on economic conditions but also on political and security in Lebanon (World Bank, 2015). Lebanon hosts approximately 1.5 million Syrian refugees, the largest number of refugees per capita in the world (UNHCR, 2021). While Lebanon maintained an open-door policy for Syrian refugees until January 2015, Syrians have increasingly reported facing more severe restrictions and discrimination (UNHCR et al., 2019). Restrictive

measures include curfews enforced by local governorates, restrictions on refugees' ability to work, and increased raids on Syrian small businesses and shops (UNHCR et al., 2019). With the unprecedented economic hardship currently experienced in Lebanon, Syrians are often branded as the cause and face discrimination (UNHCR et al., 2019).

Education System and Major Education Reform Initiatives in Lebanon

The right to free primary education for every Lebanese citizen was legalized in 1959 and has expanded since then (Abdul-Hamid & Yassine, 2020). Most recently—in 2011—Law 150 was passed, mandating compulsory and free education throughout the three basic education cycles (Grades 1–9), usually referred Cycle 1 (Grades 1–3), Cycle 2 (Grades 4–6), which together constitute the primary cycles; and Cycle 3 (Grades 7–9), also called intermediate. In addition, the mandate also provides public preschool education starting from age 3. Since the 1994 education reform, Lebanon's education system has a unique trilingual instruction policy, which mandates an equal number of hours of instruction in the Arabic language and in one foreign language (French or English). At least from Grade 7, math and science were required to be taught in either French or English; in practice, however, these subjects are taught in English or French from much earlier grades (Abdul-Hamid & Yassine, 2020). This language of instruction policy has led to significant school drop-out by students from disadvantaged backgrounds, where they have less exposure to and assistance with learning foreign languages (Shuayb, 2016).

Two important national governmental actors in education initiatives are the Directorate General of Education (DGE) and CERD. DGE, the MEHE's highest ranked administrative office, oversees and manages general education. CERD, under the

authority of the MEHE, has been responsible for education research, curriculum, textbook development, national examinations, and teacher training since 1971 (Abdul-Hamid & Yassine, 2020; Zakharia, 2011). One of the most influential national education initiatives and reforms following the civil war in 1990 was the 1994 Reform Plan, followed by the 1997 curriculum reform, on which the current curriculum is still based. Although the focus of the reform since the Ta'if Agreement was to agree on a unified civics and history curriculum to build national identity and improve social cohesion, history textbooks have undergone numerous revisions, not yet been approved (Abdul-Hamid & Yassine, 2020; Zakharia, 2011). Students still used the history textbook developed during the earlier curriculum reform in 1968–1971, in which Lebanese history ends before the Civil War in 1975 (Mejcher-Atassi & Schwartz, 2016).

In more contemporary Lebanon, the Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP), a blueprint for expanding general education, was established by MEHE. This phase of contemporary reform was initiated with a loan and advice from the World Bank Group's International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), as well as support from other donors gathered at the 2007 Paris III donor conference (Zakharia, 2011). Key objectives included: (a) increasing enrollment of public kindergarten for children between the ages of 3 and 5 years old, (b) improving retention and achievement, (c) developing adequate and equitable school facilities in all regions, (d) promoting professional development of the teaching workforce, (e) modernizing school systems and activating the School Based Management Model, (f) developing curriculum that is consistent with national needs and global trends, (g) strengthening students' national identity and their civic responsibilities, (h) supporting and promoting the use of ICT in the educational

system, (i) determining the national qualification framework for education programs and certificates, and (j) developing management and procedures for various units of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE, 2010).

More recent education strategies formulated since the Syrian refugee influx were RACE I (2014–2017) and RACE II (2017–2021). Beginning in 2012, MEHE instructed local governorates to enroll Syrian refugee students in public schools, but the implementation varied. Subsequently, RACE I Strategy focused on increasing the enrollment of Syrian school-aged children into public schools, particularly those in economically disadvantaged areas (MEHE, 2014). RACE I documents stated that the financing and implementation of the programs would involve the existing Education Sector Working Group, a coordination mechanism of humanitarian assistance for the refugee response, which included 45 NGOs and UN agencies, led by MEHE, and chaired by UNHCR and UNICEF (MEHE, 2014, p. 53).

RACE II documents clearly stated its transition to "a stabilization and development agenda [that focused on] improving MEHE's institutional technical capacity, a strengthened policy base, durable partnership, and a coordinated platform" (Abdul-Hamid & Yassine, 2020, pp. 3, 15). Documents emphasized the alignment and transition of RACE II to the SDG 4 on education, on which the actions of the MEHE had already begun. In 2018, the MEHE began its initial work on Education 2030; and the CERD, with technical support from UNESCO, has worked on developing a Lebanese Curriculum Framework, a main reference document for curriculum review and implementation, which has moved forward since 2019 (Abdul-Hamid & Yassine, 2020; UNESCO Beirut, 2019). Based on the contextual understanding of Lebanon in its history

and education system, the data collection and sampling methods of this study are described in the next section.

Data Collection and Sampling Methods

Multiple data collection methods were used to conduct this research, including interviews, document analysis, and secondary qualitative data. For interviews I specifically used various sources of data: (a) policy actors at all levels (transnational, national, local), including teachers and (b) secondary qualitative data I had collected for a separate research consultancy project. Considering the main purpose of the research was to uncover the complex processes and underlying mechanisms of education policy-making processes, I purposefully selected multiple sources of informants to ensure that varying perspectives and realities were addressed. A matrix in Appendix A further describes the logical link between multiple forms of data and how each data source helped to answer research questions (adapted from Maxwell, 2013, p. 117). An overview of each data collection method is described below.

Semi-Structured Interviews

The research questions I sought to investigate were designed to draw from the perspectives and experiences of key research participants involved in the policy-making processes; therefore, interviews were a fundamental data collection method of this research. Interviewing is the "primary way a researcher can investigate an educational process . . . through the experience of the individual people, the 'others' who carry out the process" (Seidman, 2019, p. 9). Through the interviews I aimed to explain the messiness and complexities of the policy-making processes in terms as close as possible to what had been articulated by individuals and representatives of organizations directly

involved in the phenomena (Ball, 2012b). Semi-structured interviews were used because "they more fully attend to the processual nature of conversation and the social dimensions of knowledge production" (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p. 55). The semi-structured interview format allowed me to cultivate the topics of inquiry relevant to my research questions while remaining flexible enough to ask follow-up questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In the following subsections, the sampling strategies I used to select research participants for the semi-structured interviews and the semi-structured interview processes are described in turn.

Selection of Research Participants for Semi-Structured Interviews

To ensure multiple interpretations and perspectives of the SEL–PSS policy-making processes, semi-structured interviews were conducted with policy actors at multiple levels—transnational, national, and local—including teachers at the school level.[11] More specifically, the following groups of research participants were interviewed: (a) transnational–national actors working at bilateral and multilateral governmental organizations, INGOs including transnational network actors, university research hubs; (b) national policy-makers working under the auspices of Lebanese MEHE; (c) national–local actors including national and local NGOs and Lebanese academics; and (d) teachers. A total of 48 interviews were conducted, including 23 interviews with transnational–national actors, four interviews with national policy-makers, six interviews with national–local actors, and 15 teachers. A detailed breakdown of the research participants interviewed appears in Table 1.

[11]In this project I upheld ethical and legal principles of scholarly research and writing, according to APA guidelines and the Belmont Report (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1979).

Table 1

An Overview of Research Participants Per Organization Type

Type of research participants	Organization type	Total
Transnational–national actors (n=23)	Bilateral or multilateral governmental organizations (e.g., USAID, EU, UNICEF)	6
	INGOs & transnational network actor (e.g., IRC, NRC, World Learning, INEE)	15
	University research hubs (e.g., NYU TIES, Harvard EASEL Lab)	2
National policy-makers (n=4)	MEHE or CERD	3
	Lebanese University faculty	1
National–local actors (n=6)	National NGOs	2
	Local NGOs	2
	Lebanese academics (private university faculty)	2
Teachers (n=15)	Public school a.m.–p.m. teachers	3
	Public school a.m. only teachers	2
	Private school teachers	4
	NFE center teachers	6

In alignment with qualitative research tradition and process-oriented studies, the research participants were selected by purposeful sampling strategy (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013). Overall, because I wanted to conduct vertical and horizontal comparisons applying the CCS methodology, I also used *subgroup samplings* strategy to make a comparison across these groups. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) recommended at least three cases per subgroup for the subgroup sampling strategy. Lacking a golden rule for determining sample size for qualitative studies, I was able to exceed the various recommended sample sizes for a saturation point for qualitative interviews at 48 interviews. In previous literature on methods, a sample size of three to

30 interviews has been recommended for qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Guest et al., 2006).

Key informants in the first two groups (transnational–national actors and national policy-makers) were selected, primarily using critical cases strategy and snowball sampling strategy (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Creswell, 2013). Both groups of key informants were selected based on their professional responsibilities and engagements with SEL–PSS policies and programs in Lebanon, sometimes more generally in the education sector. The first group—transnational–national actors (n=23)—comprised mostly development and humanitarian aid professionals working at bilateral or multilateral governmental organizations (n=6) and INGOs (n=15). Initial key informants in this group were recruited through my professional contacts as a scholar–practitioner in the field of EiE and specifically in Lebanon. The initial interviewees then identified critical informants I would need to interview to understand the national SEL–PSS policy-making processes.

All but two key informants were directly involved in programs and policies in Lebanon, which was a key inclusion criterion. Two key informants at the headquarters levels were added to better understand the complexities and nuances of agenda setting at the global level after the primary data analysis was completed. The key informants included both Lebanese and non-Lebanese experts in education (a majority), child protection, or program management (e.g., chief of party, monitoring and evaluation specialist) working at international governmental or nongovernmental organizations in which the education department was one of the multisector humanitarian and

development operations.[12] Two additional interview participants worked at university-based research hubs as researchers. Key informants interviewed in this group were generally highly educated professionals (holding master's or doctoral degrees). Sixteen of them had 10 to 20 years of professional experience as educators or aid practitioners or both. Many of the Lebanese key informants who had worked in the EiE field in Lebanon since or earlier than the Syrian refugee influx in 2011 had worked in two or more similar transnational organizations.

All three national policy-makers had been career government officers with 10 to 20 years of professional experiences at each entity. One of the national policy-makers had been closely involved in the national SEL–PSS policy making processes for the three years prior to this study, and another key informant had only been recently assigned for the position; therefore, experience in the policy-making processes was somewhat limited. A third national policy-maker had been involved in the national PSS policy-making processes closely, but with more managerial responsibilities. The Lebanese University key informant had not been directly involved in the national SEL–PSS policy-making initiatives but as an education faculty member at the nation's only public participated in other national education policy initiatives.

Research participants of the third group were national–local actors (n=6). Participants were recruited mostly through snowball sampling in this group. None of the participants was directly involved in the national SEL–PSS policy-making initiatives. Two national NGOs, two local NGOs, and two university faculty members were included

[12]Because of confidentiality issues descriptions of the interview participants have been left intentionally vague.

in this group of participants. Two national NGO staffers worked at Lebanese NGOs with presence all over the country. The national NGOs had specialized only in a particular sector, one in education and another in child protection, unlike multisector INGOs and UN Agencies. One of the local NGO interviewees was an implementing partner of a national NGO, and the other local NGO key informant agreed to be interviewed when I made a cold call after learning more about their work. Both local NGOs worked in limited geographic locations (one in Akkar Governorate and the other one in Bekaa Governorates), running education centers for Syrian refugee children. All four interviewees working at national and local NGOs had substantial field-level experiences as educators or humanitarian practitioners. One of the national NGO key informants holding a Ph.D. in education had previously engaged with CERD in curriculum reform initiatives. Two local NGO key informants were experienced educators with decades of work experience as a teacher and a principal in private schools. Two additional interviewees were private university education faculty members, holding doctorates from universities in the United States and United Kingdom with a substantial research and teaching experiences in education in Lebanon.

The final group of research participants comprised teachers (n=15). Initially, two teacher interviewees were recruited through a national NGO key informant. These teachers then connected me with other public and private school teachers whom they knew. Of the six NFE center teachers, five were recruited through an INGO key informant; they all worked at the same INGO-run NFE center at different locations. The remaining NFE center teacher was recruited through a local NGO. I recruited teachers through snowballing to reach at least four teachers per public school, private school, and

NFE center. After realizing that some public school teachers taught only Lebanese students under permanent contract and others taught both first and second shift schools as contractual teachers, I decided to divide them into two groups for my analysis. The following four groups of teachers, therefore, were interviewed: (a) public school teachers at both first shift (Lebanese) and second shift (Syrian refugees) schools (n=3); (b) public school teachers of Lebanese students (n=2); (c) private school teachers of Lebanese students (n=4), and (d) teachers at NFE centers of only Syrian refugee students (n=6). Appendix C summarizes profiles of the 15 teacher research participants I interviewed for this research.[13] Teacher research participants generally represented considerable variation in terms of locations of the schools at which they taught.

Semi-Structured Interview Format and Data Collection Process

Because of the travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were conducted remotely on a virtual platform, mostly via Zoom.[14] During the initial email or WhatsApp exchange for recruitment, I asked each research participants' choice for virtual platform, and I used Microsoft Office Teams and WhatsApp several times. All interviews were conducted between November 2020 and June 2021, but a majority took place between December 2020 to February 2021. Each interview lasted between 70 minutes to 140 minutes, on average about 110 minutes. Prior to conducting each interview, I received verbal consent from all research participants and provided them

[13] Profiles of teachers were collected during or after the interviews upon their consent. None of the teachers objected to the revelation of their de-identified profiles. Considering individual teacher identities are not likely to be discovered based on the profile, I included the summary profile to provide more contextual information.

[14] According to the George Washington University's Interim Policy for International Travel during the COVID-19 Pandemic effective since March 5, 2020, the data collection plan was modified.

with an overview of the research and discussed confidentiality issues and their right to withhold an answer to any of the questions as approved by the George Washington University (GWU)'s Institutional Review Board (IRB).[15] All but one research participants (n=47) agreed to be audio recorded. All audio files were transcribed before importing to MAXQDA for the analysis. I took detailed notes of the interview that I could not record during the conversation and treated it as a transcript as well during the analysis.

Most of the interviews were conducted only once, primarily because I wanted to respect participants' time during the pandemic. I interviewed five of the 48 research participants more than one time upon their agreement. Asking for a single interview was more realistic particularly for the research participants in the transnational–national group with elite interviewee status, more specifically "globalizing professionals" (Lingard et al., 2015, p. 26; see also Harvey, 2011). Still, most of the research participants were generous in taking extra time to discuss their perspectives and experiences in answer to my questions. All but five interviews (n=43) were conducted in English to avoid losing meaning in translation. Five teachers at NFE centers required Arabic-speaking interpreters, so I received the help from two interpreters for the interviews and transcriptions.[16] I used three different approved interview protocols for transnationals, national policy-makers, and teachers, as appropriate. A sample interview protocol for transnational actors is included as Appendix B. Because the level of knowledge of and

[15]The IRB waived the written approvals (digital signatures) of the consent forms and instead requested to receive verbal consents because of the potential risks of the digital signature. The dissertation research including the consent form was approved by the GWU's IRB on October 15, 2020.

[16]A modification request of adding in Arabic interpreters as research team members and the Arabic-translated consent form was approved by the IRB on February 10, 2021.

engagement with the research participants with the national SEL–PSS initiatives varied per interviewee, I did not ask the same questions of all research participants and allowed them to spend more time on the issues and events that they perceived as more important; however, I ensured that all participants were asked some key questions, crucial to answering my research questions. Specifically, interviews provided a rich account of the trajectories of the SEL–PSS programming over time, detailed processes of the national SEL–PSS policy-making processes, key roles and drivers of the national SEL–PSS policies, research participants' understanding of SEL–PSS, and educational problems SEL was intended to address and objectives of SEL programming. The following section describes the documents collected and analyzed for this research.

Document Analysis

Policy texts published globally and nationally constituted another fundamental source of the data to understand the norms, values, and ideology associated with SEL and related terms. According to Rizvi and Lingard (2010) the analysis of policy texts has gained prominence as an approach to policy analysis because "texts and language have become central to contemporary politics and policymaking" (p. 60). The following four types of policy documents were reviewed for this research: (a) 21 global policy texts used for critical qualitative content analysis; (b) two regional and 10 national-level education policy texts used for critical qualitative content analysis; (c) program or policy documents directly relevant to national SEL–PSS policies and programs published by World Learning; and (d) other relevant SEL–PSS-related documents published by bilateral, multilateral governmental organizations and INGOs. The relevant document search focused on the documents published since 2011 although I also reviewed policy

documents published prior to the period (e.g., Education Sector Development Plan published in 2010). The list of documents grew in number throughout the data collection because additional documents were recommended by key informants as well. The following provides a more detailed descriptions of each document type.

Official global policy texts were carefully selected as the first group of document sources to understand the global norm-making related to SEL and related education approaches. Understanding the official discourse used in the global level policy texts was an important step in investigating how problems requiring SEL or PSS as a global solution were constructed. The global policy script is "a medium by which the IO [International Organization] frames its own definition of a reform issue: a diagnosis of problems followed by a set of prescriptions" (Halliday et al., 2010, p. 84). I reasoned that the global policy texts would complement the semi-structured interview data with transnational–national actors to solidify the global discourse.

I selected a total of 21 education policy texts published by eight different bilateral (three USAID texts, two FCDO[17] texts) and multilateral (four UNICEF texts, two UNHCR texts, two EU[18] texts, two ECW texts,[19] four World Bank texts) governmental

[17] FCDO stands for the Foreign, Commonwealth, & Development Office of the UK. DFID, or the Department for International Development, had led the UK's international aid since 1997. According to the Department for International Development in UK, it was replaced by FCDO in September 2020.

[18] Although the EU is a regional organization among its member states in Europe, it is considered a global policy actor in its development and humanitarian aid to the countries in the Global South. The EU recently released its new strategy to strengthen its role as a key policy actor in the multilateral system, continuously supporting the UN System, Bretton Woods institutions, and other international fora (European Commission, 2021).

[19] ECW stands for the Education Cannot Wait Fund, the first global fund established during the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. The UK is the largest donor, followed by Denmark, Norway, Germany, Canada, the US, and the EU. Private donors, such as the LEGO Foundation, Dubai Cares, and Porticus are also top donors. ECW also closely coordinates with INEE and UNICEF among other global policy actors (ECW, 2021).

organizations and a transnational network actor[20] (two INEE texts). I first prioritized organizations with substantial influence on the SEL–PSS policy-making in Lebanon (USAID, UNICEF), which I identified through interviews and document review. I also considered UNHCR a crucial organization, considering that it had led Education Sector Working Groups in Lebanon and maintained a positive influence in Lebanon. Then, I added organizations who had been major donors in the education sector in Lebanon, but the focus was not specifically on SEL–PSS (World Bank, EU, FCDO). Last, I added INEE and ECW, two crucial multilateral agents in the EiE field. Appendix D indicates the corpus of documents selected for the critical qualitative content analysis. The first 21 documents fall under this group of documents. The selected global policy texts were all downloadable at respective organizations' open access websites.

The second group of policy documents was selected to illuminate the official national education policy discourse in Lebanon. RACE and RACE II strategies were the national policy documents referenced most frequently by other literature and research participants, but a broader set of multisector Syrian refugee response strategy documents were also selected to better understand some contextual factors influencing national education policies. Other documents were selected based on the research participants' recommendations during the interview or those identified useful to understand the trajectories of Lebanese education policies over time. The full list of 12 national- and regional-level education policy texts used for critical qualitative content analysis are included in Appendix D.

[20] INEE is categorized as a transnational "network-actor, that draws together key agencies and individuals that work in the field of Education in Emergencies" (Lopes Cardozo & Novelli, 2018, p. 235).

The third type of documents included program or policy documents directly relevant to national SEL–PSS policies and programs published by World Learning. The documents in this group were mostly related to the national SEL framework development initiatives under the QITABI 2 project. Documents also included broader program-related documents of the USAID-supported D-RASATI, QITABI, QITABI 2 projects, documents to which I gained access through separate consultancy work. Although I received approval to use the documents for analysis purposes, I was asked not to directly reference those not yet publicly available; therefore, the detailed list of the third group of documents has not been included.

The final type of documents comprised other relevant SEL–PSS-related documents published by bilateral, multilateral governmental organizations, and INGOs, mostly on Lebanon. The documents in this group were added throughout the data collection as recommended by research participants as well as my own literature search. The review of these documents was helpful in understanding how SEL–PSS programs evolved over time in Lebanon, particularly in NFE settings.

Secondary Qualitative Data

Five semi-structured interview transcripts were used as secondary data. The five interviews were conducted by me, using the interview protocol (Appendix F) also developed by me for a consultancy project separate from this dissertation research. The six interviewees—one interview was conducted with two research participants—included key informants for the USAID-funded QITABI 2 project. Three of the six interviewees were interviewed again for this dissertation research, thus already included as part of the semi-structured interviewees in Table 1. The remaining three participants were grouped

per type in Table 2. All five interviews were conducted between September and October 2020 and were transcribed immediately after each interview. One of the six interviewees did not agree to be recorded, so a detailed note was instead analyzed for that interview.

Table 2

Overview of Secondary Qualitative Data Participants

Type of research participants	Organization type	Total
Transnational–national actors	Bilateral or multilateral governmental organizations (e.g., USAID, EU, UNICEF)	1
n=3	INGOs & Transnational network actor (e.g., IRC, NRC, World Learning, INEE)	2

The secondary qualitative data was generated from my consultancy work for a university-based research institute, which operates its own IRB, obtained a Federal Wide Assurance, and is registered with the Federal Office for Human Research Protections. The five interviews were conducted based on the IRB approval received by the research institute. Interview data were transferred to the organization according to the consultancy agreement, but I received permission to use the interview transcripts to be included as a part of my dissertation research.

Data Analysis

The iterative, reflexive, and recursive data analysis I completed for this research emanated from my interest in examining the processes of policy formation. With the qualitative case study design of this research, I aimed to focus on "developing the actual events and processes that led to specific outcomes by discovering actors' reasoning and circumstances in specific contexts" (Maxwell, 2012, p. 37). Because the goal of this research was to discover underlying mechanisms and multiple factors at play in

institutionalizing SEL policy, I sought a "process approach to causal explanation" to describe the SEL policy-making in Lebanon (Maxwell, 2012, p. 37; see also Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). Four main steps constituted my data analysis: (a) data immersion, (b) coding-categorizing, (c) connecting strategies, and (d) synthesis and interpretation (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Maxwell, 2013; Miles et al., 2014). I describe the four steps in turn below. These four steps were generally applied to both interview transcripts and documents, but I include additional description of the critical qualitative content analysis I applied to policy texts after explaining the four steps.

Overall Data Analysis Process and Methods

The first step, data immersion, involved familiarization with the data. I read through all interview transcripts and listened to the recordings to accurately clean my transcripts. In addition, I reviewed the memos I wrote after the interviews during this phase. Listening to the recordings allowed me to recontextualize each interview with research participants' voices and other verbal and nonverbal cues. During this initial reading, I wrote analytic memos when preliminary themes and patterns emerged. I also made notes on possible codes during the reading of the transcripts.

Then, the second step was coding or categorizing strategies. My goal in coding was "not to generate frequency counts but to fracture the data" to systematically reorganize the large amount of data into categories to enable comparisons (Maxwell, 2009, p. 237). During the first cycle of coding, I applied the open coding or initial coding, in which I used both inductive and deductive approaches to finalize the coding scheme for this research. I initially developed categories based on the research questions (e.g., role of transnational actors). In the categories and subcategories, I generated some etic

codes deductively from the literature and analytical frameworks (e.g., technical support), but I prioritized to generate more emic codes as closely related to what key informants said as possible (e.g., bridging role between DOPS and CERD; Maxwell, 2013; Saldaña, 2013). All interview transcripts and documents were coded using MAXQDA2020 software.

The axial coding approach was used for the second cycle of coding (Saldaña, 2013) to generate key themes. During the axial coding phase, I focused on merging, rearranging, renaming, and removing some of the initial codes, and then putting them into categories and subcategories to identify patterns and themes (Saldaña, 2013, p. 218). Especially for interview transcripts, various perceptions of the categories emerged, for example, the role of transnational–national actors, category above, depending on the role of research participants in national SEL policy-making. I used the repetition technique to find the themes that occurred and reoccurred across key informants, but I also made sure I applied the constant comparison method to identify the perspectives expressed across multiple interviews and to have codes to store differences among them in the system (Dye et al., 2000; Harry et al., 2005; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Reflective memos from data collection and analytic memos from coding and analysis were mainly used during the second cycle of coding and the analysis stage to categorize codes and find patterns in the data. Again, themes were generated not based on frequency but potential significance in answering the research questions, because the research participants had different level of engagement to the national SEL initiatives in Lebanon.

The third step of analysis was connecting strategies. After generating themes per category, I realized that my research question required me to have a storyline involving

the processes and main ideas in smaller cases to compare vertically, horizontally, and transversally. In particular, my first research questions drew attention to the trajectories of SEL–PSS policy-making over 10 years, and to understand underlying mechanisms and factors that influenced the institutionalization of SEL–PSS in the national education system, narrative analysis, tracing causation, was crucial to presenting my findings in the CPE evolutionary framework of variation, selection, and retention described in Chapter 4 (Bazeley, 2021; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Although data reduction through coding was helpful in finding main themes systematically in the data, putting the data segments back together with the narrative approach enabled me to establish relationships among factors, rationale for interactions, and the sequence of events in more comprehensive way (Bazeley, 2021; Maxwell, 2012).

I also used a connecting strategy from the cross-case analysis approach, but I did not explicitly bound or define the case as aligned with the principle of the CCS approach (Bazeley, 2021). To answer my research questions thoroughly, themes and patterns I intended to find were not limited only to the overall story: I also investigated within case and cross-case of type of participants (e.g., comparison of transnational–national, national policy-makers, national–local actor groups as well as comparison of public school a.m.–p.m. teachers, public school first shift teachers, private school teachers, and NFE center teachers). Comparison and contrast of more cases with the narrative approach allowed me to achieve a richer understanding of the dynamics and perceptions (Bazeley, 2021).

The last step of the analysis was synthesis and interpretation. During this phase, I revisited my coded segments with CPE's analytic framework of the four selectivities to understand various strategies enabling institutionalization of SEL in Lebanon by actors

and organizations at multiple scales. Initially using each of the four selectivities—structural selectivity, discursive selectivity, agential selectivity, and technological selectivity—as subcategories in open coding, I soon realized the four selectivities framework would bring together some data points with theoretical interpretations. From the standpoint of CCS methodology, the fourth step—to synthesize and integrate the findings across multiple scales—was crucial to generate some insights for future research on SEL and more broadly, transnational education policy studies (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). As described above, even for the document analysis, generally the principles underpinning the four steps were largely applied. In addition, I applied critical qualitative content analysis to the policy texts as explained in the following section.

Critical Qualitative Content Analysis of Policy Texts

Qualitative content analysis is used in this research to make systematic analysis and inferences from texts (M. Bengtsson, 2016; Bernard & Ryan, 2010; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; White & Marsh, 2006). Data analysis typically involves connecting to the context, but the principles of qualitative content analysis were particularly useful with the policy texts because I was not part of their context in contrast with my involvement in the contexts of the semi-structured interviews that I conducted. Of the four document types I had collected, I applied critical qualitative content analysis method to 21 global policy texts and 12 regional and national level educational policy texts as listed in Appendix D. For this specific group of 33 policy texts, I focused on answering the second research question on similarities and differences in the conceptualization of SEL and the identified problems SEL was intended to address over time. The approach was not used to count frequencies as in a quantitative approach to content analysis but to analyze in

depth texts that included not only what was said in the policy texts but also the underlying meanings of the texts (M. Bengtsson, 2016).

I defined my approach to qualitative content analysis as "critical" qualitative content analysis because I applied "a critical lens to an analysis of policy texts to explore underlying messages within those particular texts as related to issues of power" (Short & Worlds of Words Community, 2017, p. 6). As aligned with my theoretical approaches to the overall research and commitment to critical theory, I also was interested in examining how power and inequality was manifested in the policy texts (Apple et al., 2009; Ball, 1993, 1994; Dale, 1999; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Steiner-Khamsi, 2012). My conception of power here resembled Foucault's conception of power, which surpasses formal governmental and political power in that the "production of discourse raise[s] questions about the practice of government and how public policy is formed, shaped and reshaped, as opposed to institutional histories, and how it is linked to political rhetoric" (Hewitt, 2009, p. 5). The overall analytic strategy I used—the four CPE selectivities—derived from critical theory with the assumption that agents and organizations have varying degrees of power to reduce social realities, privileging certain realities and approaches (Sum & Jessop, 2013).

I focused on these power dynamics and inequalities by asking guiding questions, such as What evidence was used to justify the need for SEL? How does the policy text represent Lebanese and other refugee students, teachers, parents, and Lebanese authorities? and How is SEL framed in the text as a solution to the problems? Asking these questions, I intended to investigate the framing strategy these global authoritative institutions used to legitimize the rationale of selecting SEL as a global solution. I also

attended to the varying levels of negative portrayal of the research participants, particularly how these global agents with power framed students, teachers, and government officials in the Global South. I focused on SEL-related discourses that had been socially and politically produced in policy texts.

The process I took in analyzing the policy texts using critical qualitative content analysis generally followed the four steps described above. I carefully chose the policy texts based on the criteria I elaborated in the data collection section, then read through the chosen policy texts more broadly to immerse myself in the data. I used the list of guiding questions (see Appendix E) for reading of the texts to focus my attention on the particular questions I wanted to answer in some of the long texts. Based on these questions, I developed the emic codes within the broad etic categories of the research questions. I then categorized policy texts, similarly using the coding and categorizing strategies noted above. The coding process allowed categorizing text segments by relevant codes of specific questions (e.g., educational problems SEL was intended to address). Once I completed the open coding and axial coding processes, I also reread the texts to focus more attention on the issue of power, framing with the four selectivities as a step for synthesis and interpretation. This step illuminated the power aspect for its potential in examining the messages underlying the policy texts. The findings from the policy texts were compared across the organizations that had produced the policies. In addition, intersubjectivity among the texts facilitated an understanding of which agents held power in transferring knowledge.

Once the policy-text focused analysis was done, the findings were analyzed using the cross-case analysis approach described earlier. This mainly involved comparing and

contrasting from the findings from the interview data with various types of social actors at the vertical levels (e.g., transnational–national actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors). The results of the analysis of 21 global policy texts appear in Chapter 5. Findings from the national policy texts are referred to as a data source in Chapters 4 and 5 but not as a separate category. In the following section I address validity.

Validity

Instead of using the concept of validity as it customarily appears in quantitative research design, I strived to ensure that the evidence was trustworthy throughout my research. In other words, I have not implied that I have found the objective truth of the quantitative research tradition, but I understood the concept as the "correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, and interpretation" (Maxwell, 2013, p. 122). I did not expect to achieve statistical generalizability; instead I aimed for analytical generalization (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p.117). The underlying mechanisms and factors emerging from this study may be generalizable to another case in another context. I carefully undertook the research practice and was transparent about the logic of my methodologies to generate "valuable propositions regarding processes, which can be examined in other cases" (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017, p. 120). Throughout the research process, I attempted to assess the accuracy of my findings as best described by research participants and me (Creswell, 2013, p. 249). In order to do this, I applied several strategies.

First, I ensured accuracy through triangulation of the data. I used multiple data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews with various sources of research

participants and document analysis to provide the most accurate evidence. Second, I also conducted member checking and respondent validation when possible so that the participants' perspectives were correctly described. When key informants agreed, I conducted follow-up interviews to clarify research participants' accounts and my understanding. The five participants I interviewed more than once provided additional contextual descriptions and nuances. Last, the rich and thick description that grew from the study was made based on my long-term involvement and understanding of the context in Lebanon. Thus, I focused on internal generalizability within Lebanon than external generalizability while striving for analytical generalization (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017; Maxwell, 2013).

Limitations of the Study

The few limitations of this study include the following. First, because of the COVID-19 travel restrictions, data collection could not be conducted in person. Given that the research focused on the mechanisms and power dynamics during the SEL policy-making processes by comparing global-level policy texts, regional, and national-level policy texts, transnational–national actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors, the integrity or accuracy of the data collected was not substantially impacted. With most of the research communicating through the Zoom virtual interviews, I was still able to conduct face-to-face (as opposed to telephone or written) interviews to gauge various research participants' perceptions of SEL policy-making processes, challenges, and expectations. All research participants experienced some logistical challenges resulting from regular power cuts in Lebanon during the interviews, yet this was not a major obstacle. We simply waited for a few minutes, and we were able to resume the

interviews. In a few cases interview participants were based in rural areas with slower internet connectivity; in those cases, we turned off the videos and continued with verbal communication. None of these situations affected the integrity of the data.

Second, some limitations may have resulted from interview languages. I originally planned to conduct interviews only in English because I was concerned that the interpreters' nuances would be lost in the virtual data collection; however, this limited the recruitment of teacher key informants. In several instances teacher interviewees wanted to encourage other teachers to be interviewed, but the latter did not feel comfortable answering rather complex and abstract questions about SEL in a language other than the one with which they were most comfortable. A few key informants agreed to speak with me in English, but they felt somewhat limited in expressing themselves fully in English; therefore, this may have limited the thick descriptions of such perspectives. I believe, however, that this did not affect the integrity of the data overall because most of my research participants were comfortable or fluent in speaking in English. In addition, five NFE center teachers were interviewed in Arabic with Arabic interpreters. I intentionally worked with two interpreters so that they could cross-check translations of consent forms and the interview protocols in Arabic; therefore, I am generally confident the English-translated transcription of the Arabic interviews still accurately captured the perspectives of teachers as much as I did in the interviews in English, despite some linguistic connotations might have lost in translation.

Third, the findings might underrepresent local actors' perspectives to a greater degree than I originally envisioned. The original design of my data collection placed more weight on the local actors in addition to teachers, including interviews and focus-

group discussions with more diverse actors, such as Syrian refugees and Lebanese youth and children as well as their parents, to achieve alignment with my commitment to centering the voices of the powerless. Given the limitations of travel restrictions, including students and parents in remote data collection was not possible; nevertheless, I aspired to interview teachers to represent the local actors, which I find as a limitation because of the power teachers holds in student–teacher relationships at the school However, I believe I committed myself to recruiting teacher participants who were able to provide genuine perspectives about education policy-making and policy implementation in Lebanon. They contributed valuable insights to the national- and transnational-level accounts.

Researcher Positionality

I strived to remain reflexive about my own positionality and how it might have influenced data collection and analysis. As a qualitative researcher, I do not aim to become "vulnerable-free," but to be reflexive about my role as a researcher during the research process (Howard, 2020). As a critical researcher who usually researches populations or phenomena in the Global South, I understand the criticism of international development projects in which a data extraction model is typically used: Data is collected in the Global South and analyzed in the Global North, without proper recognition of research participants and collaborators as intellectual partners (Camfield, 2014). Here, I first reflect on my identity and positionality to be transparent about my perspective and experience. I then reflect on power dynamics during the interview processes and how this might have influenced the data collection processes. Finally, I discuss ethical challenges conducting research virtually with research participants in crisis-affected contexts.

I am a female, South Korean doctoral researcher based in a United States higher education institution with ample experience working, researching, and residing both in the US and countries in the Global South, including Lebanon. I have worked as a humanitarian practitioner at INGOs and an applied researcher in Lebanon both remotely and in country since 2009. Because of my years of work experience supporting humanitarian and development aid projects as well as research projects in Lebanon, I have had fairly good experience working with teachers and transnational–national actors in and outside Lebanon; however, I acknowledge that my exposure to the context might also have led to subjective interpretation and presumptions (Creswell, 2013). My efforts to remain reflective included writing memos during the data collection and analysis to examine my preconceptions and biases.

As in any interview, my experience of conducting interviews for this study was a "joint process of discovery" and a relationship building experience (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Because each interview process was socially constructed between an interviewer (myself) and an interviewee, the power dynamics I perceived varied depending on the research participant group. Most teachers as well as local NGO and national NGO practitioners, (implicitly) perceived me in a position of power as a Ph.D. candidate in a US-based institution (Cronin-Furman & Lake, 2018). I was extra careful in inquiring about their understanding of concepts like SEL and PSS because most of the teachers were unfamiliar with such concepts. When I assured them that no consistent definition was in place and that I was interested in learning how they defined such concepts and how it was practiced in Lebanon, some felt comfortable; but many still tried to verify and

confirm whether their understanding was "correct." Many also anticipated some "global definition" that they needed to learn as teachers.

The power dynamics played out differently with transnational–national actors. Significant variation occurred among the members of the transnational–national group, depending on their own perceived positionality. Many of my research participants were technical experts or elites (Harvey, 2011; Lingard et al., 2015; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Some of the participants did not want to venture beyond what they perceived as politically correct, continuously describing their experiences as "objective" accounts; however, most others were more genuinely open and candid. My previous experience working at INGOs may have encouraged participants to open up and share their perspectives, often under the assumption that we belonged to a similar epistemic community, indicated with phrases like "as you would be aware."

Finally, I continuously reflected on ethical and emotional challenges I had experienced in researching with Lebanese informants deeply impacted by the multifaceted crises (Cronin-Furman & Lake, 2018; Shesterinina, 2019; Wood, 2006). I was grateful that nearly 50 research participants, including 15 teachers, agreed to speak with a researcher who was not even present in the country. Soon, I realized that each Lebanese research participant, unless paid in foreign currencies, experienced day-to-day financial challenges. Most of the participants spoke about the reality that their salaries were now only one-eighth of the value of what it had been. Contractual teachers described their realities of illness because they were not entitled to any social protection schemes, including health insurance. I felt pity and outrage to hear the challenges. Sometimes, asking questions on ideational topics like SEL may have been perceived as

lofty, far removed from the dire realities teachers and students experience in Lebanese public schools.

In responding to the ethical and emotional challenges, what was more difficult was that I had little to offer in the form of reciprocity within the context of remote data collection. Despite such limitations, I tried to remain authentic and honest about what I could offer or do for the research participants whenever an opportunity arose. For example, a contractual teacher participant who was on strike asked me whether I could share a teachers' petition with a UN agency authority who would pay the contractual teachers' salary MEHE was not paying. I shared the petition letter with a research participant whom I interviewed at a UN agency and followed up with the teacher after a few weeks. However, I also truthfully told the teacher that the issue would be likely a complicated matter because a UN agency would be unable to decide on its own for various reasons. The teacher was genuinely happy that her and her colleagues' voices were heard and that I had checked in with her regularly. The ethical challenges also made me question the utility of my research focusing on policy during these challenging times, but the research participants reminded me that representing their voices in the research would ultimately pressure the relevant ministries and international donors to act more responsibly. I sincerely hope my research findings represent the multiple and diverse perspectives in Lebanon the way research participants wished.

Chapter 4. Transnational SEL–PSS Policy-Making Processes in Lebanon

The purpose of Chapters 4 and 5 is to respond to the two research questions based on findings generated from semi-structured interview data and document analysis. This chapter directly responds to the first research question: *What were the processes by which SEL developed into national education policies in Lebanon since the Syrian refugee influx? And in particular, how and why did transnational–national actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors influence the institutionalization of national SEL policies?*

The first section that follows answers the first part of the research question above. To do so, I adopted a CPE framework whereby macro political, economic, social, and contextual factors were viewed as key drivers to better understand the various influences in SEL–PSS policy-making processes. More specifically, I adopted Jessop's (2010) analytic framework, particularly three evolutionary mechanisms—variation, selection, and retention—and articulated the history of SEL–PSS[21] policy-making in Lebanon from 2011 until the time of this writing (June 2021). This time period can be divided into four phases, at each of which a different set of actors exerted influence over those policy-making processes.

The second section deals with the second part of research question, and I pay special attention to the role of policy actors and their rationale for participating in the national SEL–PSS policy-making processes in Lebanon and beyond. I illustrate how

[21] To signal the lack of distinction between SEL and PSS but also the solution for addressing current psychosocial needs of both Syrian and Lebanese students and youth, I purposefully and continuously use the conjoined term, SEL–PSS.

policy-making was redefined and reconfigured at multiple scales: (a) Transnational–national actors set a policy agenda with financial and technical resources; (b) national policy-makers played the roles of national authority figures, co-constructors of policy, and strategic planners; and (c) local actors became skeptical implementers.

Trajectory of SEL–PSS Programming and Policy-Making in Lebanon

This section depicts the macro historical, political, economic, and cultural context of the SEL–PSS policy-making processes in Lebanon since the Syrian refugee influx began in 2011, based on findings from document analysis and interview data. Tracing the trajectory of the SEL–PSS programming and ongoing institutionalization of SEL–PSS policy in Lebanon during the past decade, I demonstrate how the interaction of multiple political, economic, social, and cultural factors influenced the adoption of SEL–PSS policies and programs and which actors were influential in such processes.

The first phase, variation, which took place between 2011 and 2014, was result of the Syrian refugee influx; transnational actors helped to shape the refugee crisis response and emergent forms of PSS in NFE. The second phase, selection, occurred between 2014 and 2017, arising from the emergence of SEL–PSS as a global solution in EiE and migration policies in Europe; national policy-makers led the refugee response, institutionalized PSS, and further influenced the proliferation of PSS in NFE. The third phase, retention, followed from 2017 until the time of this writing, resulting from the launch of USAID Education Policy and the rise of SEL; national policy-makers and transnational–national actors further institutionalized SEL–PSS and consolidated PSS in NFE. Finally, the fourth phase, variation–selection–retention, ongoing since 2020, arose from the multifaceted crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic commencing March

2020, the Beirut Blast in August 2020, and the political and financial crisis that had begun in October 2019; both transnational–national actors and national policy-makers further institutionalized PSS in crisis and consolidated SEL–PSS in NFE. This trajectory is summarized in Table 3 below, and each of the following sections describes these four phases in turn.

Phase 1: Emergence of PSS in NFE, 2011–2014 (Variation)

The variation phase comprises the contingent emergence of discourses and practices (Jessop, 2010, p. 340). In the context of Lebanon, this phase occurred from 2011 to 2014 and was driven by the influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon. During this phase Lebanese policy-makers as well as humanitarian and development actors were pressured to revisit existing policy and programming approaches and open spaces for new policy ideas (Jessop, 2010; Verger, 2016). Massive funding raised for this high-profile regional crisis enabled the establishment of the architecture needed for transnational actors who constituted global and regional humanitarian governance to lead a response mainly for the Syrian refugee population. Consequently, during this first phase short-term PSS programs emerged in NFE settings with various approaches across child protection, education, and youth sectors in a manner minimally coordinated. Each of these points is discussed in detail below.

Macro Factor: Syrian Refugee Influx as a Key Driver of Education Policy Change

The number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon reached one million in April 2014, compared to 18,000 Syrian refugees two years earlier in April 2012 and the 356,000 one year earlier in April 2013 (UNHCR, 2014). The surge in refugees served as the backdrop in which transnational–national humanitarian actors significantly expanded their

Table 3

Trajectory of the SEL–PSS Programing and Policy in Lebanon Since 2011

Evolutionary Mechanism	Variation	Selection	Retention	Variation–Selection–Retention
SEL–PSS policy and programming phases	Phase 1: Emergence of PSS in NFE (2011–2014)	Phase 2: Institutionalization of PSS and proliferation of PSS in NFE (2014–2017)	Phase 3: Institutionalization of SEL–PSS and consolidation of PSS in NFE (2017–present)	Phase 4: Institutionalization of PSS in crisis and consolidation of SEL–PSS in NFE (2020–present)
Macro factor	Syrian refugee influx	SEL–PSS as a global discourse in EiE and migration policies in Europe	Launch of USAID Education Policy (2018) and the rise of SEL	Multifaceted Crises and Remote Learning Modalities
Overall education policy and programming (Actors)	Refugee crisis response shaped by global humanitarian governance	Lebanese government-led refugee crisis response	Multiscalar governance of education development programming	Multiscalar governance of emergency education response and resilience programming
Education policy and programming approaches	Humanitarian approach	Humanitarian and security approaches	Development approaches	Humanitarian, development, and resilience approaches
Governing national–regional education strategies	• Syria RRP • No Lost Generation Strategy (regional) • ESDP	• Syria RRP • LCRP • RACE I	• LCRP • RACE II • Education 2030– SDG 4 Plan	• LCRP • RACE II • Education 2030–SDG 4 Plan

Evolutionary Mechanism	Variation	Selection	Retention	Variation–Selection–Retention
Main target populations	Syrian refugees (mostly)	Syrian refugees and host vulnerable Lebanese children	Syrian refugees and host vulnerable Lebanese children	All vulnerable children regardless of nationalities and refugee status
SEL–PSS policy and programming initiatives	All in NFE: • PSS approaches mainly designed and implemented by child protection teams • Nonacademic EiE programs with various PSS-related components	NFE: • Mainly PSS approaches • IRC began its SEL program Formal education: • Weekly PSS sessions implemented in afternoon shift schools (2016– present) • D-RASATI 2 project (2015–2016) • UNICEF: (In progress) Child Protection Policy in schools and PSS activity manual	NFE: • Mainly PSS approaches integrated into NFE programs • SEL approach also gained interest Formal education: • MEHE and UNICEF: institutionalization of Child Protection Policy in Schools (2018) • UNICEF: SEL–PSS Manual finalization (2018–2020) • Development of national SEL framework • NRC: Institutionalization of PSS for second shift schools (2019–present)	NFE: • New short-term PSS programs proliferated after the Beirut Blast in August 2020 • SEL–PSS approaches consolidated during the COVID-19 pandemic Formal education: • SEL institutionalization, led by CERD and supported by QITABI and Ana Aqra Association due to COVID-19 • PSS in Crisis institutionalization online resources and development of teacher training materials

operations, shifting their focus to the humanitarian response to this population and requiring new policy approaches; existing policy priorities in Lebanon were disrupted.

Key informants across transnational, national, and local scales demonstrated this dynamic at the transnational–national level. Most key informants worked at organizations that had humanitarian and development operations in Lebanon prior to the Syrian refugee crisis, but they either "dramatically increased scale of the operations because of the Syrian crisis" (UND2, personal communication, January 13, 2021) or "the focus moved to emergency response for displaced populations from Syria" (INGO1, personal communication, December 3, 2020). Two of the key informants worked at local NGOs, newly established after the Syrian refugee influx because of new funding opportunities. A key informant working at a child protection-focused national NGO described not only the expanded operations but also the new program approaches introduced because of the crisis:

> The Syrian crisis opened the door of the donors to invest in Lebanon. We did not have any project in the prevention team other than [a] few awareness activities. Now, we have preventive child protection curricula created by specialists to help us lead our work. The team in [the] North region grew from a team of three or four to 20. (NNGO2, personal communication, March 9, 2021)

The phenomena showed how the moment of crisis "prepared the ground for crisis-induced strategic interventions" (Sum & Jessop, 2013, p. 399). In this case, PSS, represented by the preventive child protection curricula, emerged as a strategic intervention. The examples above are consistent with the data presented in the Syria Regional Response Plan (RRP), which illustrated how PSS was introduced as a key programming approach of multiple humanitarian organizations working in the child protection sector (UNHCR, 2013). Such examples showed how the new actors,

structures, and ideas appeared after the Syrian refugee influx in Lebanon. Such examples showed how the new actors, structures, and ideas appeared after the Syrian refugee influx in Lebanon.

As these changes occurred, the Syrian refugee crisis was perceived by key informants to have disrupted existing policy priorities in Lebanon, disorienting policy actors and causing them to repurpose their programming for Syrian refugees. A representative from a UN agency explained:

> Just before the Syrian refugee crisis, MEHE, [for the] first time in a long time started a serious five-year strategy for education that focused on improving the quality of education. Unfortunately, after the crisis all of this was put on hold [and eventually] completely stopped, and the focus moved to Syrian refugee children—as if everything else outside of that was working perfectly well, which was absolutely not the case. (UND2, personal communication, January 6, 2021)

Several other Lebanese key informants working at UN agencies and universities in Lebanon provided a similarly positive assessment of the five-year strategy noted above, the 2010–2015 ESDP, and conveyed regret that the MEHE "put the ESDP in the drawer" (UND5, personal communication, April 16, 2021). The key informants generally perceived that the MEHE's policy focus shifted to Syrian refugee students because international donors' pressure came at the expense of not attending sufficiently to the improvement of the already poorly resourced public education system.

Actors: Refugee Crisis Response Shaped by Global Humanitarian Governance

During this first phase, with the Syrian refugee influx overwhelming the national capacity and international funding dramatically increased, the UN and donor-driven refugee response architecture largely shaped the multisector response. The Lebanese government's disassociation from the conflict in Syria and internal political tensions

during this phase also further allowed the UNHCR and donors to fill the leadership role. In addition, although some evidence showed the MEHE playing a stronger role in formal education, overall education policy and programs during this phase enabled global humanitarian actors to lead and global policy ideas and tools to flourish.

A massive amount of humanitarian aid poured into Lebanon, and the community of global humanitarian actors, stakeholders, and organizations that managed this funding expanded exponentially, particularly beginning in 2013. Overall humanitarian aid funding to Lebanon also increased significantly in 2013 (USD 1,044.9 million), compared to 2012 (USD 163.4 million) and 2011 (USD 43.8 million).[22] As displacement from Syria escalated and spanned multiple neighboring countries including Lebanon, refugee governance structures were set up at both the regional and the national–local levels. While recognizing the unique priorities and needs of each refugee-hosting country, proponents of the regional response approach envisioned "a coherent response to humanitarian needs resulting from the crisis in Syria," which was overseen by a regional refugee coordinator at UNHCR (2013, p. 4). At the national level, the multisector coordination structure applied the refugee coordination model, co-led by UNHCR and the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (UNHCR, 2013).

During this first phase, the refugee crisis response planning and coordination were shaped mainly by global actors, including UN agencies, donor agencies, and INGOs, through the multisector coordination structure. Although such globally structured humanitarian response is not uncommon, given the unequal geopolitics of humanitarian

[22] The overall humanitarian aid funding for 2012 and 2013 was retrieved from the UNOHCA's Financial Tracking Service (https://fts.unocha.org/countries/124/flows/2020?f%5B0%5D=destinationGlobalClusterIdName %3A%21).

aid, the Lebanese government's initial inaction and no-policy toward Syrian refugees were perceived to allow UN agencies' strong lead (Geha & Talhouk, 2018, p. 651). One of the UN agency key informants, who worked in and with various government ministries since 2011, described reasons that the Lebanese government had largely relinquished its leadership role:

> I think the main issue was political will in Lebanon, especially when it comes to the war in Syria. The government was politically divided between [the] two sides, and they were fighting inside the Council of Ministers. They decided to deny that there was a refugee crisis. That was when UNHCR was unofficially given the green light from the Minister of Social Affairs at that time to go ahead and start working on their own and just to keep the ministry informed. (UND5, personal communication, April 16, 2021)

Other researchers have also found that politically loaded relationships between Syria's Bashar al-Assad regime and the political parties in Lebanon influenced the Lebanese government's seemingly neutral policy toward Syrian refugees (Fakhoury, 2017; Meier, 2014; Nassar & Stel, 2019).

Overall education policy and programming during this phase were heavily influenced by actors, structures, and standards at the global and regional scales. A Lebanese key informant familiar with both UN coordination structure and the Lebanese government side spoke about the internationally led humanitarian response system:

> The sector approach is all [the] UN agency approach and international-community driven rather than a locally driven approach. This is because you don't have a proper system in the country [where] we didn't have the alternative. And then, people just moved forward with whatever is available, so this is why the underlying scope and the driving of this [education] sector was mostly from an international perspective rather than a local one (UND5, personal communication, April 16, 2021).

In addition to the efforts to coordinate the education sector response, transnational–national actors set minimum standards of education policy and programming in Lebanon. A few key informants recalled the global humanitarian actors' role in introducing and mainstreaming the INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery, still a relatively new global EiE tool in Lebanon at the time. One of the INGO staffers described the influence of global actors in introducing global EiE tools and resources, particularly INEE in 2012–2013:

> When [the] Syrian crisis started, there were many attempts to introduce various education in emergencies tools and resources in Lebanon. We were doing some INEE workshops in Lebanon with international experts in 2013 to contextualize the INEE minimum standards, to do a Lebanon-only standard. It took some time until the MEHE was on its feet alone. (INGO10, personal communication, March 11, 2021)

Adapted from global programming approaches and standards, education policy and programming were largely shaped by transnational humanitarian actors.

In both formal and NFE settings, education programming heavily focused on providing access to some form of education for refugee students, taking a short-term, humanitarian approach. Key informants described education programming during these earlier years as "chaotic, limited to short-term, less structured, noncertified NFE activities, aiming to provide life-saving routine" to massive numbers of out-of-school Syrian refugees (INGO9, personal communication, January 25, 2021). In the formal education system, the MEHE opened up public schools early on with financial support from international donors (UNHCR, 2013). Consequently, Lebanon, as a nation–state not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, had been lauded by the international community for officially allowing refugee students to enroll in public schools and

introducing the second shifts during the 2013–2014 school year (Buckner et al., 2018; UNHCR, 2013). The MEHE's leadership during the first phase was not, however, perceived to be particularly strong by INGOs and national NGOs. An INGO staff member, for example, recalled, "MEHE, I think tried, but there was not a specific person nor an apparent strategy to coordinate" (INGO9, personal communication, January 25, 2021). Conversely, a few key informants disagreed and perceived the MEHE was "present from Day 1" because UN agencies "needed the Ministry to ensure Syrian refugee's learning is accredited" (UND5, personal communication, April 16, 2021). Based on the strong role that global humanitarian actors played, global policy ideas and tools flourished and, PSS approaches emerged in NFE.

Emergence of PSS in NFE

During this initial acute emergency phase, the need for PSS appeared across multisector Syria regional response plans; and PSS approaches emerged in NFE but were not purposefully designed in Lebanon. Key informants described some of their education programs during this initial phase of the Syrian refugee crisis as loosely and very broadly related to PSS approaches but not strongly focused. The majority of PSS approaches undertaken during this period were unstructured and were largely limited to establishing basic routines for affected children. Organizations often leveraged their existing child protection and education resources and experiences in Lebanon and globally when developing programs. Examples of the related short-term education programs mentioned by the key informants included child-friendly spaces, recreational activities, and life-skills programs. For example, one of the INGO staff said, "I remember every agency was saying that they were doing PSS including us, but the reality was that they were mostly

life skills and recreational activities" (INGO1, personal communication, December 3, 2020). The need for PSS was stated as crucial early in the first regional plan across multiple sectors, including education, child protection, sexual and gender-based violence in protection, and health sectors in 2012 (UNHCR, 2013); yet because of the emergency, research participants recalled limited coordination across PSS programs.

Meanwhile, child protection and health sectors implemented a variety of focused, nonspecialized, or specialized PSS services for displaced Syrian refugees during this period. Child protection key informants described their more frequent use of cycle-based, structured services to medium- to high-risk children, facilitated by trained social workers and psychosocial counselors (UND1, personal communication, December 16, 2020). A local NGO key informant explained that the organization sent a trained counselor to facilitate art-based, structured weekly group counseling during the first year of the organization's operation. The education policy shifted at the beginning of 2014, when the Lebanese education authorities took the lead in coordinating and standardizing the humanitarian response. The policy focus related to SEL–PSS across the humanitarian actors also shifted, marking the institutionalization of PSS and its proliferation in NFE.

Phase 2: Institutionalization of PSS and Its Proliferation in NFE, 2014–2017 (Selection)

The selection phase is defined as the subsequent privileging of discourses and practices (Jessop, 2010, p. 340). In the context of Lebanon, the selection phase occurred during the period from 2014 to 2017, when the rise of SEL–PSS as a global solution in EiE was a macro factor in driving the prioritzation of PSS as a promising solution for Syrian refugee children in Lebanon. Education policy and programming during this phase

shifted from shaping by global and regional humanitarian governance actors to governance and management increasingly under the Lebanese government. Consequently, PSS was institutionalized in second shift schools and prolifered in NFE settings. Each of these points is discussed in turn and in detail below.

Macro Factor: SEL–PSS as a Global Discourse in EiE and Migration Policies in Europe

The macro factor during this phase was the increased global interest in PSS and SEL in crisis-affected education settings and restrictive migration policies in Europe. Global interest in PSS and SEL rose in crisis-affected education settings. Recalling the time around 2014–2015, a key informant described (a) how SEL–PSS was identified as an interagency priority by both INEE working group[23] members soon after a natural disaster in Nepal in 2014 and (b) how these INGO actors eventually created another layer of interagency structure within the INEE, the PSS–SEL[24] sub-group, focusing only on the theme:

> We had a few Standards and Practice Working Group members who were working PSS in response to the Nepal earthquake in 2014. They brought it up to the broader group and we found out that there were a lot of agencies who were already prioritizing the issues. Then, the Policy Working Group also agreed that we really need to focus on the issue, and that was when we decided to bring up a sub-group so that two working groups could work on the issue together. The focus during this time [2014-2017] was to figure out what we mean by PSS and SEL and what falls under which category, because there were quite [a few] differences

[23] INEE Working Groups are "formal groups of institutional members work together to implement specific activities toward the achievement of priorities within the INEE Strategic Framework." Three working groups— Advocacy Working Group, Education Policy Working Group, and Standards and Practice Working Group— completed their terms, and new working groups were planned for 2021. Working Group members are individual representatives for each agency, largely representing the UN agencies, donors, INGOs based in the Global North with a few organizations based in the Global South (INEE, 2021b; Lopes Cardozo & Novelli, 2018).

[24] In this dissertation, I have used SEL–PSS as a conjoining term consistently to avoid confusion; however, when it comes to official subgroup or document name, I used what was officially used (e.g., PSS–SEL sub-group).

> of opinions in terms of terminology. (INGO12, personal communication, May 24, 2021)

IRC and NRC, acknowledged as leading, respectively, INGOs with SEL and PSS programming in Lebanon, were key actors in the INEE's PSS–SEL subgroup. They also consolidated their global program models and lesson-based structured curricula during this period at their headquarters. Through the INGOs, the global SEL–PSS discourse and practices were also transferred to the education sector in Lebanon.

In addition, during this period, European countries enforced restrictive migration policies in response to the Syrian refugee displacement in the Middle East region with security and stability framing (Rygiel et al., 2016; Seeberg, 2018). Most notably with Turkey but also more subtly with Lebanon and Jordan, the EU as well as other European donors took steps to control refugee migration into Europe by easing some financial burdens of the refugee-hosting countries in the Global South (Anholt & Sinatti, 2020; European Commission, 2015; Geha & Talhouk, 2018; Seeberg, 2018). Such security framing influenced overall donors' approaches to humanitarian aid to Lebanon and beyond toward Syrian refugees and, therefore, influenced transnational–national actors and national policy-makers.

Actors: Lebanese Government-Led Refugee Crisis Responses with Donor Funds

The most distinct characterisic of the second phase of the broader education response programming in Lebanon was that the MEHE became more visible as a strong leader in governing education programs in both formal education and NFE for Syrian refugees. Released in June 2014, the RACE I Strategy, the first MEHE-led education response strategy enacted to address the influx of Syrian refugees, was primarily aimed at

providing refugee students access to formal education opportunities through the expansion of second shifts at public schools (MEHE, 2014). Thus, RACE I took more of a humanitarian approach to education programming, which focused on providing access to education opportunities over the quality of education (Brun & Shuayb, 2020). In addition, because of the restrictive migration policies in Europe and new military development during this period, a security approach was also undertaken in education, particularly by the MEHE.

The strategy in keeping Syrian refugee students in Lebanese schools also aligned with donors' interest in using the security approach to education programming to prevent a large number of Syrian refugees from entering Europe and radicalizing (Brun & Shuayb, 2020; Geha & Talhouk, 2018). As a result, Lebanese ministries in general were able to request more funding to stabilize the refugee crisis with its increased negotiating power with foreign donors. For example, donors agreed to pay USD 600 per Syrian refugee student attending second shifts from 2 to 6 p.m. and USD 363 per student attending morning shifts to the MEHE as promised in the RACE I strategy (MEHE, 2014, p. 32).

In particular, many key informants working at INGOs described creating the Program Management Unit (PMU) and assigning a full-time manager within the MEHE to delegate day-to-day foreign-funded project activities as a critical milestone, transitioning to a new phase of education response programming. In February 2015, the PMU manager was designated, and the MEHE halted some of the NGO-run NFE programs in Lebanon, disallowed access to public schools, and assumed stronger leadership in the Lebanon Education Working Group meetings (Brun & Shuayb, 2020).

One INGO key informant described the significant change after the PMU manager was designated in the education response in Lebanon:

> In February 2015, when the PMU manager was designated, they took over the NGO landscape. MEHE stopped the work of many organizations implementing in Lebanon. They said, everyone stop what you are doing now, and from this moment, you have to channel all your activities through [the] PMU. . . . And then you feel like it's suddenly a new world where [the] PMU started to adopt INEE minimum standards and other Education in Emergencies tools, and from then, all other NGOs had to comply. (INGO10, personal communication, March 11, 2021)

Perhaps notably, a key informant from the Ministry side disagreed, stating, "MEHE was always present in [the] RACE I strategy and even Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) development. It only became more evident when [the] PMU was formed because you gave the face, an individual to approach and to build relationship with" (UND5, personal communication, April 16, 2021).

Nonetheless, the MEHE's regulation of NFE was generally perceived as positive by key informants working at the MEHE, UN agencies, bilateral donor agencies, and some INGOs. MEHE (2017) released the National Policy for Alternative Education Pathways, which stated, "Now could be the occasion to develop better-regulated and multi-prolonged set of education pathways that feed into the formal system" (p. 3). Most concerned by the new policy were the INGO key informants who implemented Accelerated Learning Programs (ALPs)[25] as well as smaller NGOs. Their experiences with the MEHE's rigid new regulation of NFE showed them that this control ultimately limited Syrian refugee children's education opportunities. For example, they raised

[25] ALPs were provided for "children (Basic-ALP for ages 7–14) and adolescents (secondary-ALP for ages 15–24) who have missed 2 years or more of education. ALP uses a condensed version of the national Lebanese curriculum, [in] which a school-year curriculum is delivered in 4 months" (MEHE, 2017, p. 29). With the new policy ALP is now run directly only by the MEHE.

concerns that the MEHE provided no alternative education opportunities at that time for children once they closed some of the NGO-run ALPs. An INGO key informant who managed a substantial ALP said, "Twenty thousand Syrian refugee children were suddenly on the street. It took two years for the MEHE to unify the ALP curriculum, but by that time most of the children did not go back to schools" (INGO10, personal communication, March 11, 2021). Multiple key informants confirmed that the MEHE's decision was handed down to regulate in particular schools run by Syrian religious and political organizations. The MEHE was criticized by the key informants because it closed only the Syrian learning centers without providing alternatives.

Key informants from national and local NGOs found the administrative requirements to run the MEHE-certified NFE programs difficult to navigate and, as a result, provided local, small-scale NFE programs, which would not be certified by the MEHE. For example, one of the strongly enforced regulations after the new guideline was that refugees could formally register for Grade 1 only after completing one of the certified one-year early childhood education programs (MEHE, 2017, 2019; UNHCR et al., 2020). The local NGO key informant who had run early childhood programs for years did not pursue running a certified community-based early childhood education program. Instead, she was sending her NFE graduates to ALPs at Grade 2, which resulted in refugee children attending a nonregulated NFE and then another regulated NFE before registering for the formal education system (LNGO1, personal communication, December 17, 2020). Other individuals working in academia also explained the negative consequences they experienced or potential concerns.

Institutionalization of PSS and Its Proliferation in NFE

During this phase PSS was institutionalized in the formal education system, and SEL–PSS programs implemented in NFE settings by various NGOs proliferated but in a fragmentary manner. One of the significant developments from the standpoint of SEL–PSS policies and programs during this phase was that PSS policies were introduced and implemented in the formal education system, mostly targeting Syrian refugee students attending second shifts. During this time in the ministry, PSS was the only approach and terminology used by the MEHE and the CERD; no reference was made to SEL. As shown earlier in Table 3, three major initiatives took place under the institutionalization of PSS during this phase. First, the PMU mandated a weekly 45-minute classroom-based PSS session for Syrian refugee students attending second shift schools. As a part of the approach, UNICEF funded the MEHE's request to recruit 400 psychosocial counselors and health counselors across the second shift schools, accomodating Syrian refugee students (UNICEF Lebanon, 2020). Psychosocial counselors were provided with a collection of PSS activities to implement during weekly PSS sessions, and more structured curricula for the PSS sessions were developed only a few years later. Second, World Learning implemented the USAID-funded D-RASATI 2 project. Under the MEHE's DOPS and CERD, a total of 96 psychosocial counselor coaches were qualified in 2015–2016 as master trainers for PSS, who then trained psychosocial counselors at second shift schools. Finally, UNICEF entered a collaboration with DOPS to develop and pilot the child protection policy in schools, through which DOPS psychosocial counselors were trained as master coaches on child protection, prevention, and response (UNICEF Lebanon, 2020).

In NFE settings, although the PSS programs of INGOs as well as national and local NGOs had increased in number and had become more structured at individual organizations, the humanitarian actors perceived the approaches taken to be diverse, albeit somewhat fragmentary. In this phase PSS, used most commonly in the child protection sector during the previous period, also became prominent and privileged in the education sector in Lebanon. Both for national and transnational actors, PSS was perceived as a prerequisite to provide safe and quality education to war-affected Syrian refugee children. The discourses of crisis, emergency, and trauma were frequently mentioned, linked to the PSS approach, and deemed necessary for refugee children to be "healed." Most NFE programs that included the PSS approach targeted Syrian refugee children because of their direct experiences with war. Key informants described the need for a classroom-based PSS to heal trauma and to prevent more severe mental health problems. For example, when asked why the PSS program in her organization was initiated, one of the local NGO key informants said, "It was very obvious that the children were traumatized because at that time, all children either experienced trauma directly or [had] heard of it when they fled to Lebanon" (LNGO1, personal communication, December 17, 2020). Most key informants were aware that classroom-based PSS programs facilitated by teachers differed from focused, specialized counseling and mental health services provided by trained professionals; however, a few key informants' expectations and aims of classroom-based PSS programs were conflated with focused PSS interventions by trained specialists.

More organizations used the term PSS to represent multiple related programs, including child protection programs, peace education programs, and general recreational

programs in the education sector. Through the global humanitarian architecture established in Phase 1, transnational actors, broadly including UN agencies, INGOs, and bilateral aid agencies, played key roles in prioritizing PSS as a common term during this time, based on the power of these global actors in knowledge production. The PSS Committee was established as a subgroup under Child Protection in the Emergencies Working Group in 2013. The working group prioritized PSS as an approach in its terms of reference to "prevent dangerous behaviors, build resilience, and mitigate the impact of violence on children and their caregivers." A local NGO staff commented on the reason that their character-building program was labelled PSS:

> We call it "circle time" with students and parents. What we do is more character building because we teach them to express their feelings, to resolve conflict, to talk about cooperation, and to talk about honesty. When we speak to donors or researchers, we call them "PSS" because it is easier and everyone understands this term, instead of having to explain to them the whole process. (LNGO1, personal communcation, December 17, 2020)

Few NGOs implemented the SEL program (e.g., the IRC), but most of the approaches and discourses prioritized and adopted in NFE settings were also called PSS until this phase. Although PSS continued to be a term and approach more widely used in NFE settings, the policy focus related to SEL–PSS in formal education shifted, introducing SEL into the national education system in Lebanon, discussed further below.

Phase 3: Institutionalization of SEL–PSS and consolidation of PSS in NFE, 2017–Present (Retention)

The retention phase can be defined as the phase when some of the SEL–PSS approaches were further elaborated and formally adopted as policy (Jessop, 2010). In the context of Lebanon, the retention phase occurred during the period from 2017 to the time

of this writing. The launch of the USAID Education Policy in 2018 was a macro contextual factor that influenced the SEL–PSS policy and programming in Lebanon. And the overall education policy and programming approach was undertaken by a multiscalar governance structure—in other words, by national policy-makers and transnational actors. As a result—and most notably—the institutionalization of SEL was undertaken in the formal education system in addition to PSS initiatives for second shift schools. Along with the institutionalization of SEL–PSS, additional efforts to further consolidate and harmonize PSS programs in NFE were undertaken. Each of these points is discussed in turn in detail below.

Macro Factor: Launch of USAID Education Policy (2018) and the Rise of SEL

Although new policy prioritizing SEL and related skills was prominent across multiple bilateral and multilateral donor agencies in the critical qualitative content analysis findings discussed in Chapter 5, the launch of USAID's education policy was a particularly influential factor in Lebanon that drove the SEL discourse and approach into the national education system. In USAID's new education policy, SEL gained status as foundational learning outcomes alongside literacy and numeracy, both in stable, low-income contexts as well as crisis-affected contexts. SEL was also conceptualized as crucial in achieving USAID's overall "journey to self-reliance" (USAID, 2018, p. 40). The QITABI 2 project, launched in 2019 with a USD 90 million budget over five years, was a direct outcome of the new policy, in which SEL was explicitly stated as one of three project outcomes. World Learning, the implementing partner of the project, incorporated its ongoing national SEL framework development initiative, supported by Education in Emergencies: Evidence for Action (NYU TIES project), with the QITABI 2

project. The multiscalar governance of education policy and programming in Lebanon during this phase is described in the next subsection.

Actors: Multiscalar Governance of Education Development Programming

MEHE control over both formal education and NFE programs had continued through the third phase. INGOs continued to be the main providers of education for out-of-school Syrian refugee children as well as those at risk of dropping out of formal education. In formal education, too, international funds continuously allowed Syrian refugee students' enrollment in second shift schools. During this phase, overall sector strategy transitioned from the humanitarian approach of RACE I to the development and resilience approach of RACE II in 2017: "While maintaining the humanitarian dimension of the Syria crisis response, strategic shifts need to occur towards longer term approaches that cater to the protracted nature of the crisis" (MEHE, 2016, p. 11). For example, RACE I disaggregated the target "beneficiaries" into "65 percent Syrian refugees, 20 percent host communities, 10 percent Palestinian refugee children from Syria (PRS), and 5 percent Lebanese returnees" (MEHE, 2014, p. 30). In RACE II, other than focusing on rehabilitation of refugee-concentrated schools and retention support in NFE programs, much less explicit focus was placed on refugee children.

Some notable shifts of focus from access to quality education in cooperation with the Ministry's other entities, the DOPS and the CERD, were evident. Specifically, for example, the following excerpts from the RACE II policy-text intention behind the strategy was to connect with the CERD's national curricula revision efforts, in which the fostering of skills and competencies commonly found in SEL–PSS programs was envisioned:

> The curriculum revision process. . . . will be guided by the conceptualization of a learner-centered pedagogy and key competencies (covering the cognitive, the individual, the instrumental, and the social dimensions of learning). Curriculum revision will also include the development of life skills necessary to the process of learning, personal empowerment, employability, and social cohesion (such as analytical thinking, problem solving, creativity, teamwork, tolerance, respect for diversity, etc.). . . . Within the MEHE NFE framework, e-learning, PSS, and life-skills education will be mainstreamed into the content of all the regulated NFE programs. (MEHE, 2016, p. 16)

Key informants working at UN agencies, bilateral donor agencies, and INGOs were generally well-versed in the strategy and key changes from RACE I to RACE II. In contrast, neither of the local and national NGO key informants nor teachers mentioned such national strategies. For example, one of the UN agency key informants signaled the change: "Our response since RACE II is now related to systems strengthening and the quality of education as development level, in addition to the humanitarian level" (UND2, personal communication, January 13, 2021). Other key informants similarly described the change.

Although the main focus of INGO key informants was limited largely to NFE program activities in RACE II based on their operations, some of the key informants referred to RACE II and their engagement with the MEHE and the CERD. For example, one of the INGO staff spoke about this period as follows: "With RACE II, we started seeing a lot more development projects, where organizations work at the community level to ensure [that] both Syrian and Lebanese communities are supported" (INGO3, personal communication, January 6, 2021). With the shift of overall education response policy and programming to the development and resilience approach, the following subsection describes the details of national SEL–PSS policy-making in the formal education system and the consolidation of PSS in NFE.

Institutionalization of SEL–PSS and Consolidation of PSS in NFE

During this third phase, SEL terminology was increasingly recognized and mainstreamed in formal education. In NFE, PSS programs became more consolidated across the organizations, but because of IRC, SEL discourse entered the NFE space as well. Although the most significant SEL institutionalization initiative upon which this dissertation focuses is the national SEL framework development that was part of the QITABI 2 project, a few other relevant SEL–PSS institutionalization efforts were also investigated during the data collection, including the launch of the Child Protection Policy in Schools and the subsequent launch of the SEL–PSS activity manual as well as NRC's support of the institutionalization of PSS in second shift schools. Each of the initiatives is elaborated below.

First, one of the key SEL institutionalization initiatives in progress during the data collection of this study was the national SEL framework development, implemented by World Learning in Lebanon. The original goal of the NYU TIES–World Learning project was developing SEL–PSS measurement tools. While working toward this goal, the DOPS[26] and the CERD team members decided to develop a national SEL framework, for which they drafted 11 core SEL competencies, salient across multiple SEL-related frameworks currently in place, and additional selected context-specific competencies. Table 4 shows the major milestones that have taken place in developing the national SEL framework. Table 4 shows the major milestones that have taken place in developing the national SEL framework.

[26] The CERD is not only responsible for curricula development but also the only official entity providing in-service teacher training in Lebanon. The DOPS is responsible for following-up the training with continuous coaching and mentoring.

Table 4

Major Events in Developing the National SEL Framework

Timeline	Major Events
2017	MEHE-DOPS, World Learning, and NYU TIES' 3EA opened discussions to develop SEL–PSS measurement tools.
April 2018	First of three workshops (funded by 3EA Measurement & Metrics Consortium) was held in New York by World Learning, DOPS, and NYU to explore the idea of developing SEL–PSS measurement tools.
October 2018	• Second workshop was held by World Learning, DOPS, CERD, and NYU in Istanbul, Turkey. • As a result of this workshop, CERD officially joined the consortium, but the goal still was to develop SEL–PSS measurement tools.
May 2019	• A 3-day Evidence Exchange Workshop (third workshop) was facilitated by two researchers from NYU TIES in Tunisia. • DOPS and CERD agreed to develop a contextualized national SEL framework before developing the measurement tools.
August 2019	• An SEL framework coding workshop in Beirut, Lebanon, was facilitated by the Harvard EASEL Lab. • DOPS and CERD teams coded their SEL frameworks during the workshop.
December 2019	• Data interpretation meeting, co-facilitated by NYU TIES and EASEL Lab • Developed a draft of the SEL framework based on SEL competencies and skills coded and agreed upon by DOPS and CERD • Presented the draft SEL framework to leadership at DOPS and CERD
July 2020	• An independent consultant (Lebanese University faculty member) finalized the definition of all SEL competencies and skills in close coordination with a SEL specialist from World Learning and MEHE
November 2020	• The process resumed after CERD assigned a new point person to the project.
December 2020	• Validation of the draft of 11 SEL competencies and skills began. • Participants: DOPS, CERD, and World Learning
January 2021	• Finalized the validation of the definition of the 11 competencies • Participants: DOPS, CERD, and World Learning
March 2021	• Trained enumerators (DOPS counselors for public schools and university students for private schools) on protocols for qualitative data collection
April–summer 2021 (planned)	• KIIs and FGDs were to be conducted with parents, teachers, principals, and key ministry officials to validate the draft of SEL competencies and skills in the framework and to understand how these skills are operationalized in the Lebanese contexts.

Second, closely related to the national SEL framework development was the MEHE launch of the Child Protection Policy in Schools in May 2018 with close support from UNICEF (UNICEF Lebanon, 2020). Across the SEL–PSS initiatives that had been institutionalized in the Lebanese formal education system, the Child Protection Policy in Schools was the one already formally adopted as a concrete policy at the highest level of the Ministry; the policy was signed by then Minister Marwan Hamade of the MEHE. Although the policy drew largely on UNICEF's strength and expertise in the child protection approach, the MEHE envisioned the policy "to ensure schools are safe for children and they foster their social and emotional wellbeing" (UNICEF Lebanon, 2020, p. 3). The DOPS, the department also co-leading the national SEL framework, was tasked with following up on policy implementation across all public schools in Lebanon. According to the MEHE interviewee, implementation focused on training the education corps on the policy as well as pilot testing and finalizing the "Booklet of PSS Activities" for Grades 1–6.

The final relevant initiative for the institutionalization of SEL–PSS during this period was NRC's work on PSS, mainly in cooperation with the PMU and the CERD. With the interest of the PMU manager, NRC institutionalized the Better Learning Program 1 and 2, which entailed classroom-based PSS approaches, group-based targeted PSS, and an academic skills support approach. Unlike the first two institutionalization initiatives, the NRC's engagement was primarily intended to provide the PSS activity booklet and train psychosocial counselors teaching PSS sessions in the second shift schools in conjunction with the PMU.

In the meantime, PSS programs in NFE settings became much more consolidated and streamlined. INGOs highlighted a stronger coordination and resource sharing on PSS across agencies while implementing each of their own SEL–PSS manuals and approaches. Many of the SEL–PSS activities implemented by the NGOs in educational settings were not stand-alones but integrated as part of one of their standardized NFE programs: Basic Literacy and Numeracy, Youth Basic Literacy and Numeracy, Community-Based Early Childhood Education, homework support, and retention support programs. Key informants often mentioned taking an integrated approach to implementing PSS programs in education and child protection departments. NGOs often shared similar approaches, creating safe and protective environments by building the capacities of teachers, educational staff, NGO staff, and parents for PSS and child protection. Key informants often said that they used their organization-specific set of PSS activities, but those who mentioned implementing SEL said they had used IRC's set of SEL activities in integrating them into NFE programs. While Phase 3 was still ongoing, the shift to remote learning modalities because of COVID-19 was distinct enough to be marked as Phase 4 in the following subsection.

Phase 4: Institutionalization of PSS in Crisis and Consolidation of SEL–PSS in NFE, 2020–Present (Variation–Selection–Retention)

The fourth phase captures the characteristics of all three of the phases—variation, selection, and retention—as PSS in crisis became institutionalized in a very short timeframe (Jessop, 2010). Multifacted crises and remote learning modalities as a macro contextual factor led to this new phase. During this phase, CERD led the institutionalization of PSS in Crisis while both SEL and PSS approaches became

consolidated in NFE settings. As a result, the education policy and programming at this time shifted to coexisting humanitarian, development, and resilience approaches. Each of these points is discussed in turn in detail below.

Macro Factor: Multifaceted Crises and Remote Learning Modalities

Phase 4 is an acute emergency response phase, caused primarily by the remote learning modalities put in place in March 2020 at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and exacerbated by the Beirut Blast in August 2020 as well as the political and financial crisis that had begun in October 2019. Unfortunately, Lebanon became a classic example of the cyclical nature of crisis: In a rehabilitation phase, the transition to a development phase quickly turned back to an acute emergency phase. Teachers and students were significantly affected because most of the teaching and learning had to be moved to remote or distance formats. Key informants mentioned one positive aspect of the multiple crises, most significantly that the context enabled PSS discourse to gain strong attention among members of the general Lebanese population compared to the previous phases when PSS was mostly used for the Syrian refugee population. For example, a national policy-maker spoke about the need for psychosocial support for all Lebanese because of the crises: "Not only COVID, but crisis after crisis, including [the] Beirut Blast and [the] financial crisis, we need to support Lebanese people to stay strong and positive. Physical and mental well-being is very important" (NP2, personal communication, January 11, 2021). The occurrence of sudden macro contextual crises created a moment of crisis for new ideas and discourses, this time not specifically for refugees but for all people in Lebanon.

From the standpoint of education, the remote learning modality, operating for more than a year since March 2020, required policy actors at multiple scales to devise innovative solutions to provide education opportunities for students at all grade levels. Although most of the private school teachers I interviewed said that their schools had provided synchronous lessons via platforms like Zoom and Microsoft TEAMS, teachers at public schools and NFE centers were provided only asynchronous lesson clips via WhatsApp, indicating potential disadvantages in accessing quality education through the remote learning modalities for those attending public schools.

Actors: Emergency Crisis Response and Resilience Programming.

During this phase the MEHE and the CERD continued their leadership in formal education, and transnational–national actors continued providing education to Syrian refugee students in NFE settings. Both groups of policy actors strived to transition teaching and learning in distance learning modalities. Humanitarian approaches were mainly used soon after the COVID-19 lockdown as well as after the Beirut Blast. The MEHE and various policy actors were then also required to think beyond the refugee crisis and acute emergency phase.

In the NFE sector, the Education Sector Working Group created the Well-Being Task Force as one of three task forces to support humanitarian actors in providing distance learning in NFE spaces in March–April 2020. One UN agency staff member described the process as a very successful initiative: "We created a joint task team between the PSS committee and the education sector. We started compiling resources on PSS and SEL competencies to be shared with both CP [Child Protection] and education

partners, and they made use of these resources" (UND5, personal communication, April 16, 2020).

A few INGO key informants also shared positive perspectives about the joint child protection and education initiative. For example, a child protection specialist at an INGO spoke about the experience:

> Previously, education and child protection cooperated on psychosocial support sessions but maybe less explicit. When COVID-19 started, because we had to shift everything through remote interventions, it was just a right time to highlight the need to have psychosocial intervention embedded in education even more than it was before. So this gave us an opportunity to form a Child Well-Being Task Force at a national level. Experts from child protection sector and experts from education sector met and curated PSS activities that can be used in education for vulnerable students. We all reviewed available materials together. We learned what others were doing, and we also transferred the finalized 12-week PSS materials with specific themes that were relevant and adequate to share remotely via WhatsApp. (INGO11, personal communication, April 26, 2021)

In addition, INGO and UN Agency key informants also described separate, focused PSS interventions they had undertaken, particularly because of the Beirut Blast. The next subsection includes some of the significant initiatives used to institutionalize PSS in crisis in formal education and SEL–PSS in NFE.

Institutionalization of PSS in Crisis and Consolidation of SEL–PSS in NFE

The increased interest in and discourses on PSS and well-being quickly led some humanitarian and development actors to additional policy-level work with the CERD; therefore, PSS became mainstreamed and was retained. Given the limitations of remote learning since March 2020, the CERD decided to condense the regular 27-week curriculum into 13 weeks, prioritizing the core learning objectives for all subjects across grade levels that were prerequisites and crucial to advancement to the next grade level (QITABI1, personal communication, December 14, 2020). In addition, the CERD also

developed a PSS in Crisis curriculum, based on the CASEL framework, as a resource for teachers to integrate into any school subject during online learning and upon return to school in the upcoming 2021–2022 school year.

To quickly digitize paper-based condensed curricula in all subjects as well as PSS activities into online learning resources, CERD partnered with World Learning for Grades 1 to 6, and with the Ana Aqra Association for early childhood education and Grades 7 to 12. Teams at World Learning focused on creating e-learning materials, six 15-minute voice-scripted PowerPoint presentation slides that included 1 or 2 minutes of PSS in Crisis activities introduced during the first lesson of the week and practiced throughout the week across language and math subjects (INGO4, personal communication, January 6, 2021).

The INGO and national–local NGO key informants came to a general agreement that SEL terminology would be more widely used during this phase. For example, although PSS had appeared as a key project activity in the Syria Regional Response Plan since 2012, the term "social and emotional skills" came into use in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan only in 2020 (Government of Lebanon and UN, 2020, 2021).

Summary: Trajectory of SEL–PSS Programming and Policy-Making in Lebanon

In the first part of Chapter 4, I applied Jessop's (2010) CPE analytic framework, particularly three evolutionary mechanisms—variation, selection, and retention—to understand the macro historical, political, economic, and cultural drivers of SEL–PSS programming and policy-making since the influx of Syrian refugees in 2011. To demonstrate the heuristic, longitudinal, and complex processes of the policy formation, the following four phases were reviewed and synthesized to systematically understand

macro contextual drivers, the main actors involved in the overall education response programming and policy strategies, and the key SEL–PSS policy and programming features of each phase, which led to the policy change.

The first phase involved the emergence of PSS in NFE programs (2011–2014), when the influx of Syrian refugee created a moment of crisis that led to the variation of SEL–PSS. Consequently, the total number, size, and programming of humanitarian NGOs for Syrian refugees grew significantly during this period. Global refugee crisis response structures and systems were established, bringing in multiple transnational actors, resources, and standards in Lebanon. PSS programs, although in varying forms, emerged only in NFE spaces during this first phase.

The second phase marked the institutionalization of PSS and the proliferation of PSS in NFE (2014–2017), when PSS became institutionalized for Syrian refugee students in second shift schools. Increased global interest in SEL and PSS in EiE and the restrictive migration policies of the EU and European donors influenced privileging PSS discourse over other similar educational approaches, therefore transitioning to the selection phase. Overall education policy and programs during the second phase were led by the Lebanese government, but global humanitarian coordination systems, tools, and actors continuously facilitated the education governance.

The third phase entailed the institutionalization of SEL–PSS and the consolidation of PSS in NFE (2017–present), when SEL and PSS were formally retained in the Lebanese education system. SEL became institutionalized in the formal education system mainly for Lebanese children and PSS for Syrian refugee children. In NFE settings, PSS activities became more consolidated within and across agencies. A few INGOs also

implemented SEL approaches, which were still rare. In 2018 USAID's new policy prioritizing SEL as a learning outcome and the global rise of SEL were the key contextual drivers of this phase.

The fourth phase, the institutionalization of PSS in crisis settings and the consolidation of SEL–PSS in NFE (2020–present) underwent variation–selection–retention of a new approach, in which multifaceted crises led to the prevalence of PSS discourse for all Lebanese people. During this phase, particularly with the new opportunities for remote learning modalities, crises certainly created a new opportunity to institutionalize and retain SEL–PSS approaches in the national condensed curriculum. Based on an understanding of how the SEL–PSS policy and programs had evolved since the influx of Syrian refugees in 2011, the next part of Chapter 4 contains a deeper exploration of the roles of multilevel policy actors in developing national SEL–PSS policy initiatives and the perceived key drivers motivating engagement in the processes.

Institutionalization of National SEL–PSS Policies: Roles of Policy Actors and Key Drivers

In the section above, I demonstrated how the interaction of multiple political, economic, social, and cultural factors influenced the adoption of SEL–PSS policies and programs and which actors were influential in such processes. The purpose of this section is to further examine how transnational–national actors, national policy-makers and national–local actors influence the institutionalization of national SEL policies by describing the role of policy actors at multiple levels and the key drivers of their involvement in the SEL–PSS policy-making processes.

The examination is based on the interview data collected with a particular focus on the national SEL framework development initiative (World Learning–USAID). The analysis also draws on multiple SEL–PSS institutionalization initiatives as a whole, including the development of the national SEL Framework, Child Protection Policy in Schools, Better Learning Program, and the institutionalization of PSS in crisis settings. The following subsections are organized by policy actors. Three descriptions of the national SEL–PSS policy-making processes are presented, focusing on the roles of key actors and key drivers of the SEL–PSS institutionalization processes by levels of policy actors—transnational–national actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors. I used the vertical–transversal comparison framing of the CCS methodology to highlight similarities and differences across policy actors' power and positions. Each subsection begins with the roles of the policy actor group, then continues with key drivers identified as pertinent to the respective policy actors.

Transnational–National Actors: Setting Policy Agenda with Financial–Technical Support

Transnational–national actors who had closely engaged with Lebanese education authorities in SEL–PSS institutionalization initiatives played key roles in setting policy agenda and providing necessary financial, technical, and human resource support to achieve SEL–PSS policy goals. Overall, the national SEL policy-making processes were described not only as the "most successful collaboration in recent history of MEHE and CERD" among committed individual policy actors but also as "very painful and exhausting" because of the lack of strategy and system in the Lebanese government (QITABI1, personal communications, December 14, 2020). A consensus among

individuals involved in the processes directly as transnational– national actors and national policy-makers contributed to various aspects to achieve a common goal. The process was not strategically set in stone from the outset but was an organic one that evolved to accommodate the requests and needs of both entities at the MEHE—the DOPS and the CERD. Although expected, the processes had been delayed almost a year because of internal factors—enlisting both the DOPS and the CERD and engaging them in various steps throughout the processes—and external factors, including COVID-19 most significantly but also the Beirut Blast and the financial crisis. This subsection includes the perspectives and experiences of 23 transnational–national actors as well as data from five secondary interviews. Based on the interview data, I found three major roles that transnational–national actors played (i.e., policy agenda-setter, technical support, facilitator) during the national SEL–PSS policy-making processes. After each role is described, key drivers follow.

Role of Transnational–National Actors: Policy Agenda-Setter, Technical Support, Facilitator

First, transnational–national actors played key roles in setting the policy agenda and providing a roadmap. Policy ideas and goals were introduced and proposed to national policy-makers by transnational–national actors in that they were conceived as "projects" with financial and human resources to achieve each policy agenda. Transnational actors often proposed international funding opportunities to their national partners—Lebanon-based UN agencies, donor agencies, or INGOs—to convene the conversations with national policy-makers. In the case of SEL, a network of transnational–national actors, including NYU TIES and USAID, played key roles in

setting the SEL policy agenda with financial resources. A QITABI key informant described how USAID at headquarters and other global advocacy efforts contributed to introducing SEL as a policy priority in Lebanon:

> USAID's Request for Proposal for QITABI 2 already had SEL as one of the three outcomes, and we did not identify the outcomes. Interest in SEL, I think, was at the international level, not because of USAID Lebanon's policy. Different kind[s] of advocacy from all over the world led to this focus on SEL. (QITABI2, personal communication, December 29, 2020)

Thus, funding opportunities associated with SEL from both USAID and NYU TIES initiated the policy-making processes. NYU TIES also played a key role in operationalizing the project's goal by "setting the research agenda [and] methodology and suggesting processes that will help the ministry partners to achieve the policy goals" (QITABI5, personal communication, December 23, 2020). The role of transnational–national actors in introducing and proposing new policy agenda was reaffirmed by a MEHE key informant as well. "PSS and SEL were introduced to national education system through World Learning's USAID-funded projects" (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2021). Similarly, the other two ongoing related SEL–PSS institutionalization initiatives—Child Protection Policy in Schools and BLP—were initiated with UNICEF and NRC funding. The latter in particular was part of NRC's Middle East regional strategy to institutionalize PSS in formal education systems.

Second, another role transnational–national actors frequently played in each of the SEL–PSS institutionalization initiatives was to provide necessary technical support to achieve policy goals. The Harvard EASEL Lab and NYU TIES played a crucial role in the project to develop the national SEL framework by providing technical support. Based on the existing relationships between Harvard's EASEL Lab and NYU TIES, the former

was invited to provide technical support for the coding framework using its Taxonomy Project. One interviewee said, "Harvard came, trained us on the Harvard taxonomy coding system, and we coded six existing SEL and related frameworks used by DOPS and CERD to identify common competencies" (QITABI1, personal communication, December 14, 2020). In addition to setting a roadmap for processes, NYU TIES suggested "rigorous and scientific, internationally recognized" research processes (QITABI 5, personal communication, December 23, 2020). A MEHE key informant praised NYU TIES as a "very advanced lab, and they came with their knowledge and research" to develop the national SEL framework (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2021). Transnational actors used technical specialists, globally available methodological frameworks, and program models to provide necessary technical support.

A role similar to that of transnational–national actors—providing technical support by transmitting global frameworks, program models, and tools—was also carried out in UNICEF and NRC projects. DOPS worked with UNICEF-funded international consultants to develop a PSS activity manual for the training of psychosocial counselors at second shift schools. One of the highlights of the consultant's role was introducing CASEL's SEL framework to UNICEF and DOPS in Lebanon, using PSS as an overarching term because it was originally intended for implementation during PSS sessions at second shift schools. A key ministry informant described the consultant's role in introducing CASEL's SEL framework and how it was used in the development of the PSS activity manual:

> For the PSS activity manual, a consultant through UNICEF proposed to distribute PSS activities on the CASEL competencies, and then we reviewed the CASEL competencies, and we noticed that it could cover the main issues. So we distributed the activities that we had on the CASEL competencies and on different

> age group from Grades 1 to 6. And then we conducted research to fill the gaps because our activities did not cover all the grades, all the topics. (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2021)

Similarly, SEL tools and manuals were brought in by international experts. NRC also brought in its in-house PSS specialist as a resource person, equipped with global PSS manuals, to train CERD master trainers, who then trained psychosocial counselors in second shifts and Arabic teachers in morning shifts.

Third, transnational–national actors, particularly Lebanese education professionals who worked at UN agencies, donor agencies, and INGOs, played key roles as intermediaries between transnational actors and national policy-makers to facilitate national SEL–PSS policy-making processes. This role was particularly important for World Learning in developing the national SEL framework; the organization played a key role not only among transnational actors, including NYU TIES, Harvard EASEL Lab, USAID, IRC, and national policy-makers but also and more importantly between DOPS and CERD within the Lebanese government. When asked to describe the role of World Learning during the national SEL framework development processes, a key informant from the organization depicted it as a "bridging role, in terms of relationships and dynamics. The most challenging thing about the process was the relationship between CERD and DOPS" (QITABI1, personal communication, December 14, 2020). The process of developing the national SEL framework with DOPS and CERD at the same table was almost unanimously praised not only by those who were engaged in the process but also by multiple transnational–national actors who were aware of the political tensions between the two entities. For example, one of the national policy-makers closely

involved in the processes of national SEL framework development described World Learning's crucial role as a facilitator over the years as follows:

> World Learning played a great role, not only during QITABI but since D-RASATI2. World Learning suggested many times DOPS and CERD to work together. They invited both groups, . . . I think strengthening the system through enhancing coordination and collaboration. I think this could be a model to other projects because one of our biggest challenges is that that we work in silos. (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2021)

When I probed how the national processes of SEL framework development differed from other institutionalization initiatives, the same national policy-maker compared it with the process of developing the Child Protection Policy in Schools. "The collaboration was indirect and superficial. UNICEF worked with DOPS. And UNICEF worked with CERD separately." This differed from the way that both entities had been engaged together throughout the process, facilitated by World Learning.

Key Drivers: Headquarter Policies, Systems Strengthening, Evidence Building, and Obtaining Credibility

This subsection describes the four key drivers that motivated transnational–national actors to engage in the processes of national SEL–PSS policy-making in Lebanon and the manner in which they unfolded in the process. The key drivers are headquarter policies, systems strengthening, evidence building, and obtaining credibility. First, transnational–national actors facilitated SEL–PSS institutionalization processes in Lebanon because they were prioritized at the headquarters of the organizations. The programming focus of SEL–PSS was driven by education strategies and policies at organization headquarters in the United States and Europe beyond the causes and problems identified in Lebanon. For example, key informants involved in the USAID-

supported QITABI 2 project design stated, “SEL became a full-pledged approach in QITABI 2 after working closely with the Education in Conflict and Crisis team because it was a strong focus at the USAID headquarters” (QITABI8, personal communications, September 23, 2020). NRC, an INGO that had implemented a key PSS institutionalization initiative in second shift schools, reported that the approach was derived from its Middle East regional strategy. “We serve the whole Middle East, but our focus countries are now Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine. We are trying to institutionalize our interventions into a formal education system, which is a very ambitious strategy” (INGO1, personal communication, December 3, 2020). Similarly, for INGOs, headquarters’ influence was so significant that many borrowed the organizations’ global program models and adapted them to use in Lebanon.

Second, transnational–national actors considered bringing in SEL–PSS policy and programs into the formal education systems as a way to strengthen the Lebanese education system to ensure sustainability and self-reliance. Systems strengthening and self-reliance were often key policy goals organizations used to assess the success of development or humanitarian assistance projects. For example, a USAID key informant stated, “Sustainability is a huge issue across the board, not only education but all USAID’s programs and sectors” (QITABI8, personal communication, September 23, 2020). An INGO key informant explained that “the main theory of change of our PSS programs is that we strengthen and institutionalize the provision of quality holistic education experiences, . . . inclusive of PSS in formal education system” (INGO1, personal communication, December 3, 2020). Sustainability was perceived to be

strengthened when the national government took on the programs originally implemented by transnational–national actors.

Across transnational–national actors, the way to strengthen sustainability was often commonly understood as ensuring national policy-makers' ownership and building their capacity throughout the processes. For example, a UN agency key informant described the organization's role in facilitating ministry-led initiatives as a pathway to ensure sustainability in the national education system:

> When we roll out trainings and capacity building initiatives, we do equip ministry staff with skills, because after all, we do not want them to rely on programs. We want this to be institutionalized within the ministry itself. And we try as much as possible to have a long-term thing. We would like initiatives owned by the ministry. We worked with the ministry from Day 1 and the whole development of all the details. It wasn't a product that we brought from somewhere and translated it and suggested to the ministry. (UND1, personal communication, December 16, 2020)

Beyond this, QITABI key informants emphasized working with the existing national education system and avoiding creating a parallel structure. Unless the current Ministerial entities were on board with every step, one key informant did not think institutionalization would be endorsed by the Ministry and the CERD as a national policy (QITABI2, personal communications, December 29, 2020). Overall, transnational–national actors viewed the concept of sustainability as something that remained at the national level.

Third, transnational–national actors initiated or participated in SEL–PSS institutionalization processes because they were interested in research components to build empirical evidence on SEL in the Global South. Both NYU TIES and Harvard's EASEL Lab were intensely interested in SEL contextualization and measurement as well.

The lack of developed or adapted SEL measurement tools in the context of the crisis-affected Global South was one of the key drivers behind transnational actors' initiation of the SEL institutionalization processes. According to a key informant,

> One of the things that we realized in doing impact evaluation on SEL was that there aren't a lot of measurement tools that have been developed and tested in the context that we're working in. So we applied for a grant to actually build a consortium of research practice–policy partnerships to develop or adapt and test measurement tools. (QITABI5, personal communication, December 23, 2020)

The funding opportunity from Porticus to develop measurement tools in the Global South enabled a multiscalar interaction between NYU TIES and World Learning at the INEE Round Table on PSS and SEL, held in Florence, Italy, in 2017 (QITABI2, personal communication, December 29, 2020). Next, DOPS became engaged through World Learning, and following many other encounters, the idea for the development of a national SEL framework took shape.

In addition to the interest in measuring SEL, because a majority of the current evidence on SEL comes from the United States, transnational actors based at headquarter levels voiced the importance of the evidence building in the Global South.

> It is our first attempt at doing schoolwide SEL, trying to target SEL on a systematic improvement level. We are trying to do it on multiple different levels of the system. It's massive, and a lot of money is needed in order to try to accomplish this, so we don't always get the opportunity to do this. . . . It is something that we are planning on studying a lot more. How much of the difference will it make if SEL is integrated into the national curricula or national government-level approaches? (INGO2, personal communication, December 18, 2020)

The increased interest in SEL in the formal education system is also relevant to the next point of the discussion.

Fourth, transnational–national actors, particularly INGOs, explained the importance of institutionalization to gain credibility for future funding opportunities. An INGO key informant highlighted the importance of institutionalization in gaining credibility for future funding opportunities. “The second that your organization has a MEHE-approved, ministry-approved materials, it’s not hard for a donor to be like, ‘Oh yeah! That’s a good organization. They know what they’re talking about’” (INGO8, personal communication, January 19, 2021). Other INGO key informants reflected a similar rationale in working with the MEHE or the CERD to position the organization as a thought leader in SEL or PSS programming. Understanding the roles and key drivers of transnational–national actors, the analysis now turns to national policy-makers’ perspectives on their role and key drivers in the processes.

National Policy-Makers: Authority to Adopt SEL–PSS as Official National Policy

Even though SEL–PSS policy agenda was influenced and set at the global level through transnational–national actors, national policy-makers played key roles in recontextualizing SEL and PSS as the approaches inserted into the formal education system in Lebanon. This subsection includes the perspectives and experiences on the role of national policy-makers, contributed by two MEHE staff members, one CERD staff member, and a Lebanese university professor as well as their counterpart transnational–national actors. The roles played by national policy-makers included serving as the authority on policy adoption, co-constructor of recontextualized SEL–PSS policy, and strategic planner—each of which is addressed in turn below.

Roles of National Policy-Makers: Authority, Co-Constructor, Strategic Planner

First, national policy-makers exercised the role as official authority in SEL–PSS policy adoption. National policy-makers' subsequent roles were performed based on the official authority that they were given as government officials as they interacted with transnational–national actors. Their official power allowed national policy-makers to exercise their agency by resisting and recontextualizing SEL–PSS-related initiatives in Lebanon, but such authority was perceived to be more administrative than substantive. In the case of national SEL framework development, all transnational–national actors described the challenges of dealing with the Lebanese education system, in which little decision-making power was allocated downward in the system. For example, a QITABI key informant spoke about the challenge of requiring approval by the highest authority, the president on the CERD side, to approve smaller details:

> [Part of the] challenge is that CERD has a really hierarchical structure. I don't know if there is any change now, but previously, the president basically had to approve everything, and she was just really busy all the time. We always had to wait until the president responds, and nobody else on the team who were part of the project would respond. Individuals are ready to engage and give us feedback, but only if we would have formal workshops on a regular basis. Otherwise, nobody was given authority to respond to emails. (QITABI5, personal communication, December 23, 2020)

Similarly, key informants spoke about difficulties in gaining frequent approvals by both entities, DOPS and CERD, which delayed the overall process of the SEL framework development.

These administrative delays beyond the individual's authority and commitment were raised as a major challenge. A QITABI team member spoke about the challenges of having CERD engaging again, particularly in integrating SEL into a COVID-condensed

curriculum and the cautious approach they took as an INGO partner when working with an official authority:

> It was not easy to convince CERD because they see themselves as they are the official entity responsible for the national curriculum, which they are. No matter how QITABI considers that we have expertise, USAID funds, knowhow, [and] the goodwill to support, the official entity will never allow any project to come forward and say that we are here to help you. (QITABI3, personal communication, January 4, 2021)

NGO key informants, who were keen to work closely with the MEHE and the CERD as a means to gain credibility and to ensure sustainability as described in the previous section, pointed out what some might consider abuse of authority exercised by ministry staff. For example, an INGO key informant spoke about the lack of clarity in the processes (e.g., varying timeline of the revision) CERD used in endorsing SEL–PSS and other education materials with various INGOs. The key informant described the review process as "nitpicky that required minor tweaks, which ended up being 15 drafts until getting approved" (INGO8, personal communication, January 19, 2021). The MEHE's approach was perceived as an unnecessary exercise of power requiring minor administrative changes.

Second, national policy-makers played key roles in the recontextualization process as co-constructors of Lebanon's SEL–PSS policy. Although the broad SEL–PSS were brought in as policy agendas or labels by transnational–national actors, national policy-makers closely co-constructed details and contents of the SEL–PSS policy initiatives specific to the context in Lebanon. Consequently, key informants at multiple levels described the SEL policy-making processes as a co-construction process. A DOPS key informant highlighted the roles of DOPS and CERD as locally owned knowedge

producers along with the transnational actors during the process of developing the national SEL framework. She described the shared knowledge production process with a salad metaphor:

> Everyone came with their own package, and we put them all together and we try to make the best salad of these ingredients, and I think this is healthy. This is not just imported. It's being open and not importing the whole structure, but the elements, the raw materials . . . . We were supported by the expertise of our colleagues at NYU and Harvard. It was the support [needed] to produce something, a collaborative work. (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2020)

NYU TIES and Harvard's EASEL Lab key informants also emphasized how consciously they worked to avoid imposing global knowledge or process upon national policy-makers. Both emphasized that although they did want to have a deliverable at the end (e.g., contextualized measurement tools), they remained very flexible to have national policy-makers in the driver's seat. Emphasizing the point, a Harvard EASEL Lab key informant stated, "We were really careful to make sure that the team didn't see the coding system as prescriptive, and it is just a tool for looking at connections across frameworks" (QITABI4, personal communication, February 5, 2021). The mutual interest in the locally relevant SEL tools between transnational actors and national policy-makers enabled a collaborative and respectful process.

In contrast, a MEHE key informant compared most other internationally funded projects to the national SEL framework project. She explained the importance of the "production mindset" in which national policy-makers produced locally owned knowledge instead of simply adapting global program models. She also indicated that "99% of the programs in Lebanon are imported" with the "mindset of consumption":

> When we try to produce with support of very advanced labs like NYU, it is very meaningful and important to me because we cannot stay passive. Especially with big emergencies, lots of international programs are imported in some ways. They come with agenda of very respectful INGOs. They are developed elsewhere, and they come and support. We work with different NGOs, and we understand and respect efforts that have been made. But it is outside in a different context, and it's just really adaptation, contextualization as if someone is a square and wants to be a circle and just cut[s] the edges. (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2020)

This perspective also led to the DOPS reaching an agreement with the CERD that their experience working with the CASEL framework "did not really fit Lebanon" and that "a single framework that could be used by both DOPS and CERD" was desirable even if the project timeline were extended (QITABI5, personal communication, December 23, 2020). The national policy-makers' experience working on other internationally funded frameworks allowed the ministry to become clearer about what they desired to accomplish through the SEL initiative.

Third, national policy-makers also served as strategic planners by leveraging and maneuvering various internationally funded initiatives to achieve a broader ministerial strategy. Although each counterpart was unaware, the DOPS strategically put together SEL–PSS institutionalization initiatives as foundations for the national vision and strategy. In the following quotation, the DOPS key informant described how she would bring together the Child Protection Policy in Schools and the national SEL framework:

> The national SEL framework is like the holistic vision. It is one structure that could combine everything together, also with the Child Protection Policy in Schools. Yes, actually for us, the model is a tiered model—three tiers. At the base, we have social and emotional learning, and it is awareness, and the middle is the focused PSS. And then the third is the referral of abuse cases, so it's a continuous model. It's only the degree that that matters within the same alignment and coherence of the concept of social and emotional skills. When SEL is embedded in the curriculum, that could be also embedded as tier zero. So the

> Child Protection Policy and the national SEL framework are like complementary, not either–or. (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2020)

This was perceived as done in part by intentionally maintaining a working relationship with various donors and UN agencies separately. For example, a QITABI key informant said, "I asked a few times if we could meet with UNICEF to avoid any overlap, but they were not interested [in our] engaging with them" (QITABI5, personal communication, December 23, 2020). As a result, limited understanding and coordination existed across different transnational–national actors supporting SEL–PSS institutionalization initiatives. The next section covers reasons for national policy-makers' interest in formulating national SEL policies.

Key Drivers: Harmonization, International Standards, Quality Control & Funding

National policy-makers' interest in institutionalizing SEL–PSS was attributed mainly to political and economic reasons associated with harmonization, international standards, evidence and quality control, and international funding opportunities. These four key drivers of the national policy-makers' involvement in the SEL–PSS institutionalization processes are elaborated below.

First, the most frequently recognized key driver for MEHE and CERD to participate in the national SEL framework development project was an interest in harmonization. After using various frameworks for multiple projects, both teams were interested in aligning each other's frameworks, even within each team. A MEHE key informant described their interest in harmonizing between DOPS and CERD, when joining the initiative.

> We [DOPS] needed to have the same understanding of SEL and competencies. Then if we tell our colleagues [CERD], "Look, we noticed that we have a problem

> in critical thinking," they would know what we are talking about or in self-awareness. They would know what we're talking about. So, I think it's more related to policies and future strategies. (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2021)

A transnational–national actor involved in the process reaffirmed the national policy-makers' goal to develop a unified SEL competencies framework after discussing how the previous frameworks were used between the DOPS and the CERD. The teams "did not use many of the previous frameworks because they were not a good fit for them, and . . . they needed a clear and common understanding with a unified framework" (QITABI5, personal communication, December 23, 2020). Both entities considered the national SEL framework an outcome of the collaboration because both the DOPS and the CERD approved each step of the development.

When asked about the reason that harmonization between DOPS and CERD was crucial, key informants spoke about the historically fragmented, hostile relationships between DOPS–MEHE and CERD. In principle, DOPS and the CERD[27] in Lebanon were two entities that were supposed to work closely together to plan and implement curriculum reform, teacher training, mentoring, and monitoring and evaluation; but the consistent tension between them was confirmed by multiple key informants:

> CERD is responsible for the development and review and revision of the teacher training materials and conducting the trainings of the teachers but have absolutely no right to enter the classroom. And there is another entity of the ministry—DOPS—who takes care of the coaching. These two departments do not talk to each other, so the people who trained the teachers don't know if whatever they trained is transferred into the classroom. Similarly, those people who provide the

[27]The Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD) is responsible for developing curriculum and teacher training. The School Guidance and Counseling Department (DOPS) at MEHE is responsible for mentoring teachers and following up on whether a new curriculum or teacher training programs are implemented at the school level.

> feedback to teachers in the classroom have no access to whatever the teachers have been trained on. (UND2, personal communication, January 6, 2021)

These problematic working relationships across entities within the DOPS and the CERD were commonly described as endemic and systemic rather than individual. Committed individuals at different education ministerial entities were praised for moving the processes of SEL–PSS policy-making and other initiatives forward, albeit slowly; yet several systemic issues in the Lebanese public education system were frequently raised by the key informants. Some examples of the issues raised by the research participants included the following: (a) the unclear documentation of the roles and responsibilities of the DOPS and the CERD as well as the existence of contradictory policies, (b) the lack of long-term strategy owned by the ministry, and (c) underresourced expertise within the ministry.

As described above, tensions between the DOPS and the CERD were elaborated on by various key informants of the national SEL framework development projects. In addition, tensions between the DOPS and more broadly the Director General of Education (responsible for the overall basic education system) and the PMU (responsible for second shift schools and NFE for Syrian refugee students) were also identified as very significant. A PMU manager bluntly stated that the lack of coordination in the ministry was endemic; she described her years of frustration with DOPS and CERD failing to consult with her when building on the PMU's experience with implementing PSS sessions for Syrian refugees. She said, "I am not surprised they are developing such framework without best practices used by PMU. Coordination is not very strong, and building on others' best practices is not common sense among some people and some

departments" (NP1, personal communication, December 28, 2020). These challenges in coordination across various entities within the ministry were also regarded as the source of delays in advancing policy and overlaps in multiple similar initiatives.

Second, another key driver for national policy-makers to take part in the processes of national SEL–PSS policy-making was to be aligned with international standards. In particular, a key informant at CERD, the entity tasked with curriculum reform, spoke about the importance of having the national SEL framework to develop the new curriculum aligned with the international approach—SEL:

> We are very interested in SEL framework development because the new curriculum will have to be based on social and emotional learning. Internationally, all the learning process is based on social and emotional learning, and we can't stay away from SEL. The previous 1997 curriculum had some basis in SEL but did not have a framework or vision, and hopefully the national SEL framework will do this. We hope SEL will be the basis in all subjects. In math, biology, language, sociology, economy, all of this. (NP2, personal communication, January 11, 2021)

Similarly, the interest of the ministry was described as catching up with the international trend. Another national policy-maker described the situation as follows: "It is a trend. Who said that we develop things based on needs? If it is a trend, then we follow the trend. If a donor says that nowaways it's very important to talk about SEL, we follow" (NP1, personal communication, December 28, 2020). Conversations with national policy-makers, talks by representatives of NYU TIES and Harvard EASEL explaining their SEL-related work, and available global evidence also strengthened the credibility of SEL as an international standard.

The third key driver for the MEHE, particularly the DOPS' interest in the SEL institutionalization process was developing measurement tools to collect evidence and

control the quality of various SEL–PSS programs in Lebanon. This was in response to the measurement research funding opportunity offered by NYU TIES. Key informants showed an interest in evidence-based policy to regulate the quality of SEL–PSS programs in both formal and NFE settings. A MEHE staff member described the decision to join the process:

> We were interested to develop measurement tools to measure the impact of different programs and . . . student progress. We aim to set a national standard, setting good standards, and not allowing low-quality materials to come to our children. When I say national, it is inclusive for everyone. What we are doing is to standardize every NGO, every university who wants to implement a program. (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2021)

From the DOPS perspective, developing the national SEL framework was also understood as a means to develop measurement tools. A QITABI key informant who had been engaged from the outset also reaffirmed that the initial driver of the interest of the DOPS in measurement tools began more to control the quality and the impact of burgeoning PSS projects in Lebanon as a response to the Syrian refugee crisis. In addition, she believed DOPS might also use the measurement tool for "coaching." She said that "the team will use the measurement tool when DOPS school counselors . . . [coach] teachers" (QITABI2, personal communication, December 29, 2020). These conversations affirmed that the DOPS desired some form of evidence to use at the school-level for their teacher–mentors but also to control and regulate internationally funded PSS and SEL projects.

The final key driver for national policy-makers' involvement in efforts to institutionalize SEL–PSS was current and future international funding opportunities. Those involved in the initiative to develop a national SEL framework described potential

funding opportunities contributing to a common goal without duplicating other projects. For example, one of the QITABI team stakeholders spoke about the national policy-makers' vision:

> Lebanon gets so much external funding from so many different places, and there is so little alignment with those funders. I think the systems are still so fragile and misalign themselves. . . . They don't necessarily have the capacity or the resources to push back and say, "Okay, this is our strategic vision for the next 10 years of public education in Lebanon, and we need your support in these pieces to help us kind of reach this goal that we have established for ourselves. These are the things that we will do, and these are the things that we won't do." (QITABI5, personal communication, December 23, 2020)

The same key informant believed the national policy-makers were also interested because of the potential of SEL to attract more funding. The key informant said, "SEL is very trendy, and there are a lot of funders who want to know that you are doing SEL."

At the same time, many of the key informants spoke strongly about the donor-driven nature of current project funding opportunities as key drivers of national policy-makers' engagement in initiatives to institutionalize SEL–PSS. Key informants perceived the funding that accompanied SEL–PSS projects or future funding as a key driver of adopting the SEL–PSS agenda—not the strategic vision that national policy-makers claim to have. Transnational– national key informants who worked closely with various departments in the ministry stated: "If USAID says, 'We'll give you an additional USD 10 million if you work on SEL,' of course, it is the influence of foreign funding" (INGO7, personal communication, January 19, 2021); and "DOPS and CERD were interested to work on SEL because it was profitable" (INGO2, personal communication, December 18, 2021). The donor-driven funding opportunities were further criticized by

national–local actors as described below. National–local actors as skeptical implementers are covered in the next section.

National–Local Actors: Skeptical Implementers

Local teachers and national–local NGO actors had an understanding of the SEL–PSS institutionalization processes different from that of the transnational–national actors and national policy-makers. The reason is partly that the national SEL framework was still being developed at the ministry level and had not been enacted into formal policy documents, including decrees or circulars, at the school level. The Child Protection Policy in Schools was, however, launched in 2018 and officially implemented in selected schools, according to transnational– national actors and national policy-makers. PSS sessions had been on the official timetable of second shift schools for Syrian refugee students since 2015. Given where various SEL–PSS institutionalization initiatives were, I first present an analysis based on interview data derived from 15 interviewed teachers and four national–local NGOs as well as two university faculty members as local policy implementers of these SEL–PSS initiatives. The university faculty members did not participate in the SEL–PSS initiatives but worked closely with teachers and principals as teacher educators and were hence included as national–local actors. Then, I describe teachers' perceptions of national policy-makers' interest in developing SEL–PSS as national policy.

Role of Teachers and National–Local NGOs: Skeptical Implementers

Interview data indicated a policy–practice disconnect in ongoing SEL–PSS policies at the schools. With regard to the Child Protection Policy in Schools, none of the public school teachers I interviewed had heard about the policy endorsed by the MEHE in

2018. In addition, one of the teacher interviewees (T-Public PM1) reached out to ask two other principals and a few teachers about their awareness of the Child Protection Policy to provide me with the data, but no one had any knowledge of it. In contrast, teachers at private schools and NGO-run NFE centers all had individual school-level child protection policies to which they adhered; however, these were separate from the MEHE-endorsed policy. Teachers at private schools and NFE centers did not perceive MEHE's new policies as capable of influencing their schools beyond the nationally mandated curriculum and national exams.

National–local NGO actors had their organization-specific Child Protection policies but described the influence from their respective INGO partners or UNICEF. Only a child protection-focused nationally established NGO key informant was aware of the Child Protection Policy in Schools. As an employee at a specialized protection agency, she found some decrease in the official number of abuse cases in schools; yet she also mentioned how working with local schools had become more difficult. The timing of this complaint coincided with the beginning of MEHE's regulation of NFE sectors in 2017. She described how school personnel had become more reluctant and less open about any abuse cases turned over to the organization; furthermore, the central government made access to public schools difficult. She stated:

> We had regular access to public schools for case management because we used to have a lot of cases of abuse from Lebanese teachers toward refugee children in afternoon shifts. However, after 2017, it is very difficult to get central government's permission to enter public schools from the central government. Sometimes we also found school principals are afraid that they would be punished by the ministry if abuse cases were identified, and they are less open to us anymore. (NNGO2, personal communication, March 9, 2021)

In addition, once the policy was formalized in schools, she also observed details required for official abuse case documentation prevented parents from reporting. She said, "Once we ask details required to file the case against schools, parents get scared because if the case does not get settled, their child will be at risk" (NNGO2, personal communication, March 9, 2021).

On the topic of PSS sessions in second shift schools, similarly, policy developed at the national level was not implemented as expected at the local level. None of the three teachers who were teaching both first and second shift schools was aware of PSS sessions implemented weekly for Syrian refugee students. Only one of the three teachers was aware of the school-based psychosocial counselor, and all three teachers taught at different second shift schools. Even if such sessions were implemented, other teachers at the second shift schools were not informed of such topics, which is itself concerning. One of the teachers (T-Public PM1) followed up with psychosocial counselor at the second shift primary school where she taught, and the counselor mentioned that she had received some training related to child protection issues. However, the counselor reportedly did not plan to implement anything in addition to the policy beyond her current responsibility. A WhatsApp message from the teacher read as follows:

> The psychosocial counselor told me that they have received courses from MEHE, but psychosocial counselors are currently not applying what they have learned because such policy needs to be implemented as school-wide activities. Their duties as psychosocial counselors are to ensure a suitable environment for children when in school and traffic safety when riding the bus. And sometimes, they attend to problems affecting children's behavior at home to understand whether a child is beaten or any kind of violence [exists] at home. (T-Public PM1, personal communication, April 18, 2021)

Even if PSS sessions were provided, public school teachers were still perceived as failing to create child-friendly environments. For example, one of the local NGO key informants, who provided retention support for Syrian refugee students attending second shift schools, mentioned that she noticed recently some public schools provided PSS sessions for Syrian refugee students. However, she stated that "even if the subject was taught to the students, teachers do not believe in what they are teaching. They still abuse students" (LLNGO2, personal communication, February 7, 2021). My research participants did not think that PSS sessions in second shift schools made a significant difference in the psychosocial well-being of refugee students.

Because teachers were not directly involved in the national SEL framework development processes, I briefed them about the initiative and asked them about the potential challenges to implementation of a national SEL framework at the school level. Teachers mentioned the low priority of SEL-related skills in the curriculum, lack of continous training opportunities, and the top-down nature of national policy-making as potential challenges. In addition, although not squarely in the realm of SEL–PSS-related implementation challenges, the teacher recruitment and compensation system was the most frequently mentioned systemic challenge affecting everyday teaching at the school level.

First, teachers believed SEL and related skills are difficult to implement at the school level because they were not emphasized enough in the school curriculum. Basing their comments on previous similar policies (e.g., child-centered learning, inclusion), they said unless such a framework was integrated into the curriculum and textbooks and teachers were sufficiently trained, that framework would not be implemented at the

school level. A teacher explained that "we have to teach according to the curriculum framework. We are obliged to it. Social and emotional skills or 21st-century skills need to be in the curriculm to be implemented" (T-Public-AM2, personal communication, January 24, 2021). Another teacher also described that the curriculum should guide them with clearer ways to teach such skills:

> If it's part of the curriculum, it's a kind of academic learning. It should be taught in an academic way. There should be certain rules. There should be certain rubrics, certain steps to follow, and certain instructions. Teachers are not acquainted with such type of learning. They need much training. (T-Public-AM2, personal communication, January 24, 2021)

Similarly, a teacher at an NFE center who thought civics had some commonalities with SEL–PSS, believed that public schools in Lebanon prioritized the subjects that were more important on exams. She said, "To be honest, subjects like English and math are more important. Teachers do not believe civics and other subjects are that important. I feel like public school teachers will think PSS is wasting time" (T-NFE1, personal communication, March 26, 2021).). Teachers understood the need to teach SEL and related skills in schools, but unless the formal curriculum required them to teach these topics, they did not think they would be implemented.

Second, teachers primarily voiced the need for continuous professional development opportunities for new topics, citing the current level of teacher training opportunities and topics covered would be insufficient to become competent to handle new topics or ways of teaching, such as SEL. An experienced teacher also raised the concern that contractual teachers[28] would require more training:

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[28] In the Lebanese public education system, teachers were often referred to as permanent or contractual teachers by the conditions of their employment. Contractual teachers had lower salaries and

> There is some coaching and training, but I think it is not enough. Teachers need workshops to get more practical experience, and we need more training sessions, too. Workshops, I mean, not just teaching from books, but with many practical examples and times for clarifications. Public schools especially have a lot of contractual teachers: Now the majority of teachers are contracted teachers. Such contracted teachers are unfortunately not qualified. Those teachers need even more training. (T-Public-AM2, personal communication, January 24, 2021)

Because PSS or SEL was not a familiar concept for the teachers, the need for continuous teacher training was emphasized by all teachers. Experienced teachers under permanent contract thought many of the contractual teachers would not be competent to teach the new topics.

Third, teachers also stated that the top-down nature of policy-making would hinder implementation. They raised the issue that teachers need to be better informed, and they need to be continuously supported to implement new programs. One of the teachers shared her experience of the MEHE coming to just hand over "some kind of a framework," but without follow-up, the practice was never implemented at the school level:

> Maybe two years ago, I remember the government came with some kind of a framework or policy. They visited my school and handed over the document to the principal, but teachers did not even see the framework. They didn't follow up. Teachers are the ones who implement such policy, but they should do a long-term follow-up. They should cooperate with us. Instead of just visiting and handing over those documents, they can do a lot of things. They can do workshops, seminars—they can develop a work frame and follow-up. (T-Public-PM2, personal communication, January 30, 2021)

Another public school teacher shared her frustration that a policy developed at the national level was neither shared with teachers nor implemented for teachers and

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benefits with perceived instability because the contracts required yearly renewal. Contractual teachers in this study were all career teachers looking for permanent staff appointment opportunities at public schools.

students. Although she was unaware of the national SEL framework, she shared her experience of encountering MEHE staff members whom she met at a workshop on inclusion, which was also envisioned as a strategic component when implementing the child protection policy in schools:

> When I said that we never learned about special education needs, there was a person from MEHE; and she contradicted me and she said, "No, you don't know anything we are working on. We have such support at MEHE." And then I said, "Probably, but I don't know about this because I've been teaching for 20 years, and I've never seen any teacher who does this job, the special education." But apparently, we have a group of people who work in the MEHE or CERD on this. What's the point if it's not implemented for students and teachers when they are designed for them? (T-Public-AM1, personal communication, January 26, 2021)

The individual was one of the experienced teachers discontented with the MEHE's formulating education policy at the national level without knowing the school-level realities.

Finally, although beyond the discussion on the implementation of a national SEL framework in schools, teachers considered teacher recruitment and the compensation system as the most salient issues hindering teachers' effectiveness in daily teaching in schools. They spoke about the need to address that issue before requesting teachers to implement a new approach or framework. Contractual teachers who taught at public schools had worked at public schools because they hoped to find opportunities to sign a new permanent contract; however, teachers stated that the ministry had increased the number of contractual teachers instead of opening up any new permanent positions for the past 10 years. As a result, the frustration of the teachers had increased, and they were constantly on strike. The most frequently mentioned problem that contractual teachers faced was the delay in payment of their salaries and other benefits. One stated:

> We hope someday we can get our salary every month because the ministry only give[s] us our salary every three to four months. They also do not provide us any support in health insurance. And recently, with all the currency issues, in the second shift schools, ministry receives teacher salary from UNICEF in dollars; and they give [it to] us in Lebanese, which differs a lot. They are stealing [the] difference in the currency. (T-Public-PM3, personal communication, February 9, 2021)

The practical material concern of the contractual teachers was particularly crucial during the current financial crisis.

An increasing number of unqualified contractual teachers was considered a teacher recruitment challenge as well. Some of the new contractual teachers employed to teach second shift schools for Syrian refugee schools were perceived to be employed because of their political affiliation with local authorities. Teachers and humanitarian actors alike described this teacher recruitment system as a significant challenge to implementing any new initiatives. One of them stated:

> Teachers do not do any serious work. Unfortunately, many contractual teachers come from political backgrounds. Many contractual teachers come by force, and they get paid and do nothing. Even if the principal does not like the teacher, he or she should keep the teacher because she's supported by a politician. (T-Public-AM2, personal communication, January 24, 2021)

Public school teachers explained the systemic problems in recruiting and compensating teachers as a fundamental challenge demotivating teachers from implementing any new policy at the school level. Specific to the national SEL policies, teachers found their low priority in the curriculum, lack of continuous training opportunities, and the top-down nature of national policy-making as potential challenges for implementation. The following section describes the perceptions of teachers and other national–local actors on the key drivers of the ministry to develop national SEL policies.

Key Drivers: Funding to Fulfill Self-Interest

Teachers and other local level actors believed that the ministry was interested in developing donor-funded projects because international projects would benefit the ministry staff financially. Key informants were unanimous in expressing feelings of strong mistrust toward the ministry; they did not believe that they would develop a policy for the benefit of teachers and students. A key informant at a local NGO said, "If you ask me why, they want to take the money. They are telling donors, 'Give us the money, and we will provide education to the refugees'" (LNGO1, personal communication, December 17, 2020). Teachers' misgivings about the government seemed to intensify during the financial crisis.

A teacher who had worked as a public school teacher for over 40 years did not hide her discontent with the government:

> To be honest, we don't trust the government anymore at all. They are stealing our money. We don't trust . . . nobody trusts the government anymore. They say they have to change. We start to hope, but we don't trust them anymore. When each minister comes, he changes the old stuff and gets someone related to him, and we hear the news that he is stealing a lot. . . . Unfortunately, Lebanon is in very bad condition. The ministry is trying to destroy the education system, which was once the best system, not only in Arabic countries but in the Middle East. (T-Public-AM2, personal communication, January 24, 2021)

Another teacher who had served as a teacher trainer on some internationally funded projects and had participated in national-level training also noticed that the money was not spent on teachers and students at the local level but on national-level research, travel, and events. She said:

> The ministry sees these international projects as a chance to get money. They do some research, they travel, and some final outcome documents. . . . I am not convinced with the theory. People in high positions get trained, and they transfer knowledge to people who are below them and so on until we get to the end of the

> hierarchy. The money is not spent where it should be spent. (T-Public-AM1, personal communication, January 26, 2021)

Teachers who shared critical perspectives on the ministry's rationale to engage with international donors were hardly scarce, and they perceived the corruption of the government officials as a systemic problem.

A private university faculty member who worked closely with teachers also shared the potential harm of donor-driven policies and programs to national policy-makers:

> There is no vision. There is no intent to really set a broad strategy at the ministry. The Minister of Education in a country has a mindset of a project manager. Their focus is about "What can you give us money on? What do you want? What can you do with it?" The ministry is not a strategy setter, so how can they influence? They just need money, so immediately from that point, they make it easy for the donors. And then the donors—they want to be done, most of the time. (NF3, personal communication, December 11, 2020)

The pessimistic perspective on the ministry and the ministry's relationship with international donors was similarly echoed by another univerity faculty member in Lebanon:

> The ministry has learned to find opportunities through donors. . . . They really want to make their relationship with donors centralized. Also, these donor agencies want to show that their work is . . . sustainable. There is this idea that more sustainable way of making change or reform is through policy. . . . Change of a theory [positioning] teachers, parents, and school leaders as agents of reform is far more sustainable. (NF2, personal communication, November 22, 2020)

The two Lebanese academics shared a similar perspective that the nationally adopted policy would not be implemented at the school level unless teachers and principals were included in designing the education policy.

Summary: Institutionalization of National SEL–PSS Policies: Roles of Policy Actors

and Key Drivers

In the second part of Chapter 4, I examined how transnational–national actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors influenced the institutionalization of national SEL policies by describing their roles as policy actors at multiple levels and the key drivers of their involvement in the SEL–PSS policy-making processes.

Transnational–national actors were likely the ones who introduced SEL–PSS discourses and programming ideas with necessary financial resources. They also provided technical support with human resources, global methodologies, or resources to support the national policy-makers achieve their policy goals. In addition, Lebanese professionals who worked in transnational organizations served as intermediaries between national policy-makers and transnational actors to facilitate the policy-making processes. Transnational–national actors were often interested in institutionalizing SEL–PSS because of their headquarter policies and focused on stregnthening systems, evidence building, and gaining credibility.

Even though transnational–national actors were the ones who initiated SEL–PSS projects with financial resources, national policy-makers were still the ones who had the authority to formalize the initiatives into official policy in Lebanon. They also played key roles in co-constructing details and contents of the SEL–PSS policy initiatives specific to the context in Lebanon. National policy-makers also served the role as strategic planners by leveraging and maneuvering internationally funded initiatives to achieve a broader ministerial strategy.

Economic and political reasons were salient as the key drivers of national policy-makers' interest in institutionalizing SEL–PSS. National policy-makers were interested in

harmonizing and unifying a single framework between two ministerial departments despite the existing tension and power struggle. The key informants were aware of the need to work together, and they perceived using the internationally funded project, facilitated by competent Lebanese intermediaries with technical support from highly regarded university-based research hubs, as an opportunity to do so. In addition, they believed SEL was an international standard to adopt and integrate into new curricula. National policy-makers were also interested in developing measurement tools to collect necessary evidence and control the quality of SEL–PSS programs; consequently, they saw potential in international funding opportunities.

In contrast, national–local level actors, represented by teachers and national–local policy actors, had very different roles to play in the processes of national SEL–PSS policy-making. They were automatically considered as implementers of any given school-level policies by transnational–national actors and national policy-makers, but they were generally skeptical about the role, based on the previous experience. Local-level actors believed national policy-makers would engage in national SEL–PSS initiatives to benefit themselves financially or to have power to maneuver the funding.

Summary of the Chapter

The processes of national SEL–PSS policy-making in Lebanon described in this chapter demonstrated how various actors redefined "national policy-making" at multiple scales. In the first part of Chapter 4, I historicized the heuristic, longitudinal, and complex aspects of the SEL policy-making processes since the Syrian refugee influx in 2011 in four phases—variation, selection, retention, and variation–selection–retention—applying the three evolutionary mechanisms (Jessop, 2010). The four phases were reviewed and

synthesized to systematically understand the macro contextual drivers, the main actors involved in the overall education response programming and policy strategies, and the key SEL–PSS policy and programming features of each phase, leading to the policy change.

Specifically, the institutionalization of SEL in the national education system was described as neither top-down nor bottom-up but instead as collaborative, evolving over time and involving transnational–national actors and national policy-makers. Although the authority to institutionalize SEL and PSS as official policy remained a national responsibility, data showed that the power to set the agenda with new policy ideas, such as SEL and PSS, lay at the global level. Such agenda setting was complemented by the international funds to do so and reflected unequal global power dynamics. The power of transnational actors remained across variation, selection, and retention phases.

Regarding formulating national policies, instead of adopting SEL as a complete model developed in the Global North (e.g., CASEL's SEL Framework), national policy-makers adopted global SEL *discourse*s as "international standards" but not necessarily global SEL *practices*. They then transformed the discourses such that they were policy relevant to the specific circumstances and needs in Lebanon, likely indicating SEL practice and implementation priorities would differ from global SEL approaches in Lebanese schools. The national policy-makers strategically repackaged donor priorities for SEL, PSS, and child protection in a child protection-framed national SEL–PSS strategy to better align various similar approaches. The national-policy makers did so during the selection and retention phases. Thus, SEL may be viewed as a mobile, global policy discourse and practice that had been mutating and hybridizing based on the

multiple political, economic, social, and cultural drivers in Lebanon and globally as it traveled from global to national levels with transnational actors working in Lebanon (Peck & Theodore, 2010).

Although the nationalization of SEL–PSS was considered successful among transnational–national actors and national policy-makers from the perspectives and experiences of national–local actors, it represented an unsuccessful attempt to localize SEL–PSS. Teachers were automatically considered implementers of any given school-level policies by transnational–national actors and national policy-makers, but they were generally skeptical about the role based on previous experience. In other words, once MEHE and CERD officially endorsed the national SEL framework and related policies, the effectiveness of the operationalization of the framework at the school level became problematic because of the endemic mistrust of the Lebanese government among the teachers.

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Chapter 5. SEL–PSS as Transnational Discourse: Local Problems With Global Solutions

In Chapter 4, I examined the roles of actors in the SEL–PSS policy-making processes taking place in Lebanon from the Syrian refugee influx in 2011 to the time of this writing (June 2021). Transnational–national actors influenced the processes by setting policy agenda, and national policy-makers played the role as co-constructors and strategic planners of the policies as official national authorities. National–local actors, particularly teachers, deeply mistrusted the MEHE and were generally skeptical of any education policies designed for students and teachers by the ministry.

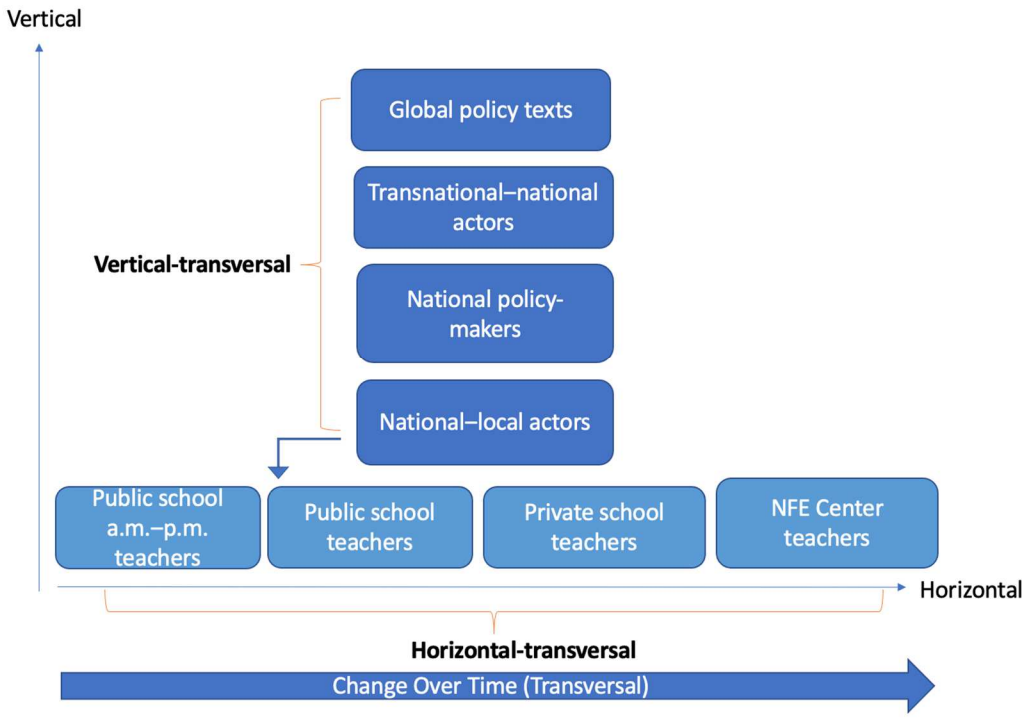
In this chapter, I examine the various actors' conception of the SEL–PSS policies and programs. The intent of this chapter is to understand whether and how each of the various policy actors conceptualized SEL differently, including over time, and thus to respond to the second research question: *How are discourses on SEL similar or different at the global, national, and local levels; and how have they evolved over time?* This research question is further divided into two subquestions: (*a) What are the similarities and differences in the conceptualization of SEL (in the policy texts and in discussion) by transnational–national policy actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors? and (b) How have the problems SEL was intended to address evolved over time?* By answering these questions, I intend to highlight the potential mismatch between locally specific educational problems and the technification of SEL as a global solution.

To answer these questions, the results of semi-structured interviews and the critical qualitative content analysis of policy texts are presented on the vertical,

horizontal, and transversal axes of comparative case study methodology. A summary of the structure of the vertical–horizontal–transversal comparisons appears in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Organization of Chapter 5: Vertical–Transversal Comparison and Horizontal–Transversal Comparison



In the first section I discuss and compare definitions and understandings of SEL across four levels—global policy texts, transnational–national actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors—yielding a vertical comparison. In addition, the first section includes a comparison of the issues identified as educational problems for SEL to address and the objectives of SEL over time at each of the above levels, making the comparison transversal. In the second section I take a deeper dive into the definitions and understandings of SEL by comparing those definitions and understandings across four

types of teachers: (a) public school teachers at both first shift (Lebanese) and second shift (Syrian refugees) schools; (b) public school teachers of Lebanese students; (c) private school teachers of Lebanese students, and (d) teachers at NFE centers of only Syrian refugee students. This comparison of several types of actors at the same level, whose experiences and perspectives are mediated by the actors presented on the vertical axis, constitutes a horizontal comparison. This section also offers a transversal comparison because it compares the discourses on educational problems SEL was intended to address and its objectives over time among these teachers.

Vertical-Transversal Comparison

Through a vertical–transversal comparison in this section, I trace SEL and related terms across four levels—global policy text, transnational–national actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors—and across time to illuminate the power dynamics defining and disseminating SEL and related discourses. The concept of SEL and associated terminology are reviewed vertically to understand how, by whom, and at which level educational problems requiring solutions were determined. The transversal comparison comprises a review of the construction of policy solutions over time. The findings, derived from the results of the analysis of data from 21 global policy texts, 48 semi-structured interviews, and five secondary qualitative data, show how SEL–PSS policy ideas and the related discourses traveled and interacted across various scales. These findings are discussed at each of the four levels in turn below.

Global Policy Texts: The Rise of SEL as a Global Solution for Learning and Well-Being

To understand how, by whom, and at which scale problems were identified and similarly at which scale policy solutions were constructed, I first examined global policy texts. I expected the analysis to reveal some of the ideologies and discourses associated with SEL in the official policy documents. In order to understand current definitions of SEL as well as changes over time in those texts, in this section I present findings from 21 global policy texts from multilateral organizations (four UNICEF texts, two UNHCR texts, two EU texts, two ECW texts, four World Bank texts), bilateral donors (three USAID texts, two FCDO texts), and a transnational network actor (two INEE texts). In addition, I also describe the education problems identified by bilateral and multilateral agencies and the objectives they formulated. The global policy texts included education policy documents as well as policy briefs or guidance notes specific to SEL and related approaches. The full list of policy texts can be found in Appendix D.

Overall, I found that organizations conceptualized and defined SEL and related terms narrowly as teachable and measurable skills and as depoliticized education programming approaches in the Global South. Definitions and tools mostly originated in the United States and Europe. The popularity of SEL appeared in global policy texts published in and after 2018, when increased attention was given to the quality of education as opposed to access to education, laying the groundwork for new policy priorities like SEL. Across multiple organizations, SEL and related approaches emerged as new global policy solutions, addressing a learning crisis in stable contexts and psychological distress resulting from prolonged adversities in crisis-affected contexts in the Global South. The forgoing arguments are supported with evidence in the subsections below. In the first subsection, based on the various definitions of SEL and related

terminology (see Appendix G), I identify organizations' application of the terminology in various operating contexts, definitions the organizations used, and changes over time. In the second subsection, I present key issues identified by multiple organizations as problems SEL was intended address and the objectives of SEL and related programs. The description also includes changes over time.

Conceptualization of SEL and Related Approaches

In this section, I show how the global policy texts across multiple organizations conceptualized SEL and PSS as depoliticized and technical policy solutions in the Global South. The three key themes and trends identified in the analysis of the 21 global policy texts were (a) organizations that used the term SEL or social and emotional skills, mostly drawn from the US-based CASEL's definition of SEL, legitimizing this particular conception of SEL as a global definition; (b) SEL as a new representative term and policy focus around 2018–2019; and (c) the use of SEL in both stable and crisis-affected contexts and the use of PSS exclusively in crisis-affected contexts. Each of the key themes and trends are described below with supporting evidence. A summary of the terms used, definitions of those terms, conceptualization, and applicable contexts across each of the policy texts appears in Appendix G.

First, the global policy texts applied a largely Eurocentric conception of SEL and related terminology in constructing the knowledge base of SEL. Most of the organizations that used SEL, or social and emotional skills, as the representative or general term, including INEE, EU, UNHCR, World Bank, and USAID, drew on CASEL's definition of SEL: "the process of acquiring core competencies to recognize and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, appreciate the perspective of others,

establish and maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle interpersonal situations constructively" (Elias et al., 1997, p. 2). Most notably, USAID (2019) used CASEL's five domains and set of social and emotional skills as "illustrative SEL skills" (p. 2). Meanwhile, organizations using PSS or MHPSS as representative terminology in crisis-affected settings, including UNICEF, INEE, and ECW, applied the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on MHPSS, published in 2007.

The international organizations not only directly defined SEL and related terms but indirectly constructed the SEL knowledge base by suggesting indicators and measurement tools developed in the United States. The most eminent example was the MHPSS Technical Guidance Note, announcing that all ECW-funded countries were required to include school-based and focused MHPSS interventions and activities (ECW, 2021). ECW emphasized that the Guidance Note was not intended to be prescriptive and that activities would vary per context and local capacities, but for the required outcome-level indicators, users were advised to refer to the "MHPSS indicator library," in which SEL measurement tools developed by institutions in the United States were predominant (e.g., CASEL's Guide to Scholarship: SEL Competencies for School Staff Personal Assessment and Reflection Tool and SEL surveys developed by the American Institute of Research and Panorama Education, both based in the United States).

In addition, INEE, a transnational network agent in the EiE field, demonstrated its influence and power to standardize and define terminology as shown in EU (2019), UNHCR (2019), and ECW (2021) texts. Publications by INEE, most notably, its background paper on PSS and SEL published in 2016 and Guidance Note on PSS published in 2018 were directly referenced when the EU, UNHCR, and ECW defined

"SEL" and "PSS." INEE, however, adopted CASEL's definition of SEL and Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (2007) definition of "MHPSS" and "PSS"; therefore, Global North-centric definitions and concepts were further circulated and legitimized. According to INEE (2018), "SEL is an important component that sits under the PSS umbrella. SEL is an important component of PSS that educators can and should address since it . . . contributes to children's and youths' improved psychosocial wellbeing" (p. 14).

Second, SEL emerged as a new representative term and policy focus around 2018–2019. Even though other related terms, such as PSS and life skills, were used in earlier texts, for example in USAID (2011) and UNICEF (2007), they appeared only briefly and without the same level of importance as in more recent policy texts. To examine the changes over time, the most up-to-date education strategies and policies of USAID, World Bank, UNICEF, and UNHCR were analyzed and compared with the previous policy documents. These four organizations were selected for analysis on their use of SEL and related terminology over time because of their influence in education policy-making in Lebanon. Across USAID (2018), World Bank (2018), and UNHCR (2019), "SEL" emerged as a new representative term and policy focus. In the earlier strategic documents of each organization, none of them used the term. In its earlier education policy, USAID (2011) mentioned "PSS" and "life skills" only once each as an illustrative example in programming for crisis-affected settings but without further definition. In 2018, the term "social and emotional skills" was extensively used, and the concept gained status as foundational learning outcomes alongside literacy and

numeracy. USAID (2019) published a separate policy brief dedicated to "SEL" and "soft skills."

Although somewhat different in meaning, the term "transferable skills" appeared as UNICEF's representative term in its new education strategy (2019a). A published document dedicated exclusively to introducing a global framework for transferable skills included an assertion that the concept is "also known as life skills, 21st-century skills, soft skills, or socio-emotional skills" (UNICEF, 2019b, p. 1). According to UNICEF (2019b) transferable skills can be divided into three interrelated categories of skills—cognitive skills, social skills, and emotional skills (p. 10)—which resonated with the three primary categories in the Harvard EASEL Lab's SEL Taxonomy Project (S. M. Jones et al., 2017, p. 15). In UNICEF's 2006–2015 education strategy, a stark difference emerged in its emphasis on quality of education in general and its limited use of "life skills" as a term to represent all nonacademic skills. As in other organizations, the term was not defined but explained as "an effective life skills program" that "focus[es] on self-identity, negotiating skills and coping behaviors" (UNICEF, 2007, p. 11).

With less dedication and focus than USAID or UNICEF, World Bank and UNHCR also used the term SEL in their recent strategies. World Bank used only "socioemotional skills" as a representative term to name a set of nonacademic skills in its World Development Report 2018, stating that SEL and others "are complements to foundational skills" (World Bank, 2018, p. 166). No particular term was used to represent nonacademic skills in its earlier 2011 strategy. UNHCR (2019), too, first used "SEL" in its new strategy, referring to INEE's (2016) definition of "PSS" and "SEL." In its earlier education strategy, UNHCR (2012) used "PSS" without specific definition and "life

skills," specifically for youth programming, which included "personal development skills of critical thinking as well as reproductive health and HIV prevention" (p. 25). In the UNHCR (2019), both "SEL" and "PSS" were used as its programming approaches, without further differentiation between the two.

Third, organizations' use of terminology was also dependent on contexts: SEL and related terms (e.g., transferable skills for UNICEF) were used in both stable and crisis-affected contexts, and PSS was exclusively used in crisis-affected contexts. World Bank, FCDO, and the EU differentiated the terms they used per context: SEL and transferable skills only for stable contexts and PSS for crisis-affected contexts. The EU used SEL and added MHPSS in crisis-affected contexts, following INEE's definitions. USAID and UNICEF used representative terms ("SEL" and "transferable skills") in all contexts as learning outcomes. In addition to the transferable skills label, UNICEF (2019b, 2019c) also introduced "MHPSS," "PSS," and "SEL" as programming approaches in crisis-affected settings. Organizations whose primary mandate was in emergency and fragile contexts (INEE, ECW, UNHCR) used "PSS," "SEL," and "MPHSS" with specific definitions. "Life skills" and "soft skills" were terms used mostly with youth populations; the term life skills was sometimes used only for crisis-affected contexts (e.g., USAID, 2011). Figure 4 summarizes various organizations' use of terms and approaches across contexts. Based on the varying use of "SEL" and related terminology across organizations, the next subsection focuses on issues identified as educational problems to be addressed with SEL and related approaches as well as projected objectives of SEL described in the reviewed policy texts.

Figure 4

Summary of Terminology and Programming Approaches Used by Organizations Per Context

Context	Terminology and programming approach		
	SEL (and transferable skills, 21st-century skills)	PSS	SEL+PSS (+MHPSS)
Stable	World Bank (SEL) FCDO (transferable skills) EU (all three terms)		
Crisis-affected		World Bank, FCDO	INEE, ECW, UNHCR, UNICEF, EU
All contexts	USAID (SEL), UNICEF (transferable skills)		

Educational Problems to Address With SEL and Objectives of SEL Programming

After defining SEL the second part of analyzing global policy texts involves understanding what educational problems SEL is meant to deal with and how the objectives of SEL programming are described. Two key challenges intended for SEL and related programming approaches to address across the global policy texts were identified in the analysis. First, organizations with mandates in both stable and crisis-affected contexts in the Global South pointed to a learning crisis as the most salient global problem to address. Consequently, SEL and related approaches, including transferable skills and 21st-century skills, emerged as new policy solutions to resolve the learning crisis. Some organizations (e.g., World Bank, FCDO, EU) separated the goal of learning using SEL approaches in stable contexts from the goal of well-being with PSS approaches in crisis-affected contexts, while other organizations (e.g., USAID, UNICEF) considered SEL (or transferable skills) to be prominent policy solutions to improve

learning outcomes in both stable and crisis-affected contexts.

Second, in fragile and crisis-affected contexts, psychological distress resulting from prolonged exposure to crises was the most crucial problem to address. In this context, SEL and other approaches had the potential to improve psychosocial well-being and foster the resilience of crisis-affected children and teachers. The next two subsections describe in detail the relevant evidence to support the two challenges identified in the analysis.

Learning Crises in Stable, Low-Income Countries. Across the more recent 17 global policy texts published by eight different organizations, a learning crisis was identified as the most critical problem to address in education in the Global South. With the global education agenda shifting from access to education to the quality of education with sustainable development goals (SDGs) released in 2015, the organizations identified learning as a means to achieve a quality education. SEL in this context was framed as measurable learning outcomes on its own, or effective skills to learn as a means to improve academic outcomes like literacy and numeracy. Among the organizations, some (World Bank, FCDO, EU) confined the goal of learning using SEL approaches only to stable contexts. Others (USAID, UNICEF) considered SEL (or transferable skills) a prominent policy solution to improve learning outcomes in both stable and crisis-affected contexts. When compared with the previous education strategies of some of the organizations (USAID, World Bank, UNICEF), the description of SEL as an effective approach to improve learning outcomes in stable, low-income contexts was recent and a relatively new development.

All five organizations—World Bank, FCDO, EU, USAID, and UNICEF—used the same source, a UNESCO (2017) fact sheet, to construct the problem of a learning crisis, highlighting even those who attended school but were unable to meet minimum proficiency levels in reading and math. The very language of crisis triggered a sense of urgency and the need to generate solutions to resolve the problem, which was the intent of the policy texts. For example, a UNICEF (2019b) document stated:

> At the current rate, by 2030, of the 1.4 billion school-age children in low- and middle-income countries, 420 million will not be on track to learn the most basic skills in childhood, and 825 million will not be on track to acquire the basic secondary-level skills they need to succeed in life, school, and work. (p. 13)

Organizations also used ideational framing of the issue to trigger the urgency even more: "the learning crisis is a moral crisis" (World Bank, 2018, p. 3). Based on this problem statement, improving children's learning outcomes emerged as a concerted global education policy effort across these organizations.

SEL was framed as an effective technical global solution to tackle the learning crisis across the organizations, all of which defined SEL and related skills as learning outcomes. Instead of promoting to address root causes of a learning crisis that may be socially and culturally contingent, acquiring social and emotional skills were generally illuminated as an apolitical and technical solution. There were some mentioning of potential interplay between SEL and social markers, such as, gender, power, and culture (i.e., USAID, 2019), it was not highlighted across the texts. Among the organizations, USAID and UNICEF emphasized social and emotional skills and transversal skills, respectively, across all contexts with specific guidance documents on SEL for respective country office staff and a broader stakeholder group; but the emphasis somewhat differed. At USAID (2018) social and emotional skills were foundational skills for future

learning and success along with literacy and numeracy, largely from the perspective of human capital theory. Children and youth with strong social and emotional skills were imagined "to do better in school, in life, and at work because they gain the skills needed to lead productive lives and contribute positively to society" while emphasizing its potential to strong returns in higher earnings (USAID, 2019, p. 1). Because social and emotional skills were treated as learning outcomes, USAID (2019) encouraged the measurement of the social and emotional skills of children and teachers at baseline, endline, and other critical points to build an evidence base in the Global South, particularly in relation to its impact on academic and employment outcomes.

Unlike USAID, UNICEF (2019b) approached skills development from the perspective of human rights, naming it a "human rights-based vision of quality learning" (p. 9). UNICEF differentiated foundational skills, including basic literacy and numeracy, from transferable skills but explained its focus on foundational skills and transferable skills together to improve learning and skills development. UNICEF outlined its vision to support developing transferable skills comprehensively through classroom-based pedagogy as well as curricula in addition to creating safe, violence-free environments staffed with trained and supportive teachers and parents in strengthened national systems (UNICEF, 2019c). A considerable explanation was devoted to effective programming strategies for fostering transferable skills. Still, they primarily drawn from the evidence and experiences from high-income contexts as if they were decontextualized expert strategy (UNICEF, 2019b).

Other organizations—World Bank, FCDO, and EU—described social and emotional skills (World Bank) or transferable skills (FCDO, EU[29]) as learning outcomes that education aid would target to improve but often without much explanation on how to do so. SEL and related skills were not given equal importance with literacy and numeracy skills. For example, FCDO elaborated the aim of its education: "focusing on tackling the learning crisis at its root by supporting children to learn the basics of literacy and numeracy, as well as transferable skills" (DFID, 2018, p. 9). Similarly, the EU also considered skills broadly in addition to literacy and numeracy as learning outcomes to improve with little elaboration on the skills (EU, 2020). In the World Bank's (2018a) framing from the perspective of human capital theory, the aim of SEL was conceptualized to further foster and strengthen literacy and numeracy, the foundations of learning that "promotes employment, earnings, health, poverty reduction at the individual level and spurs innovations, strengthens institutions, and fosters social cohesion at the societal level" (p. 3). Unlike FCDO or the EU, to focus on improving the learning of these skills, including SEL, the World Bank strongly emphasized the importance of the measurement of learning as a priority to make the learning problem visible, which further technified and depoliticized the approach (World Bank, 2018).

Across all five organizations, investing in teachers to improve teaching and learning and to strengthen national education system of the recipient countries was emphasized. Despite the laudable intention to provide assistance, which would be a key in successful implementation of SEL approaches, the depiction of teachers and the

[29]Without specific representative terminology the EU (2020) used all the following: social and emotional skills, transferable skills, noncognitive skills. The term 21st-century skills was also used but in a slightly different manner, focusing on creativity, communications, digital skills, and leadership.

national education system in the Global South in the global policy texts was generally based on deficit perspectives. For example, FCDO (2018a) described "Much teacher training in developing and conflict-affected countries remains ineffective. Many candidates start with a deficit in foundational skills" (FCDO 2018, p. 6). The EU policy text also cited "school leaders [who] lack the capacity to plan and manage resources and staff, and report effectively" (EU, 2020, p. 27). The World Bank (2019) generalized teaching forces in the Global South as "often lack[ing] the skills, support, or motivation to teach effectively, and the result is teaching time that is lost or poorly used" (p. 18). This depoliticized and generalized depiction of teachers and national education systems in the Global South would potentially limit opportunities to build on already existing capacity and strength of the teachers.

Unlike others, UNICEF described teachers from a more human rights-based perspective. For example, instead of blaming teachers for a lower quality of education leading to learning crises, the writers of the text made teacher issues and teacher training an aim for education programs but did not generalize teachers in low-income contexts as incompetent or unethical (UNICEF, 2019a, p. 29). As described above, SEL was framed as an effective technical global solution to tackle the learning crisis across the international organizations, all of which defined SEL and related skills as learning outcomes. The focus now shifts to the policy texts designed for protracted and crisis-affected settings.

Psychological Distress as a Barrier to Learning in Crisis-Affected Contexts. Across all the global policy texts relevant to crisis-affected contexts, "psychological distress due to prolonged exposure to crises" was most often highlighted as the severest

problem to address with SEL or PSS programming. Such a simplified problem was identified as a major issue obstructing the achievement of quality education for all in crisis-affected, protracted crises, and fragile contexts. Children and youth with distressed psychological status resulting from prolonged exposure to crises were also described as unable to learn, further exacerbating the learning crisis. Organizations whose primary focus was on crisis-affected contexts (INEE, UNHCR, ECW) integrated the aim of learning and well-being with SEL, PSS and MHPSS approaches in tackling the problems. Others differentiating their SEL–PSS approaches by contexts, World Bank and FCDO applied PSS approaches with the aim of improving psychosocial well-being but without much attention to learning. USAID and UNICEF kept the focus on improving learning also in crisis-affected contexts, but UNICEF added protection along with learning as program goals in such contexts.

Within the political, social context of the global commitment to SDGs and the increased awareness of disrupted education opportunities faced by crisis-affected children, a significant increase has occurred in interest and commitment to crisis-affected and fragile contexts by various bilateral and multilateral donors. Although problems identified as most salient for SEL–PSS approaches were mostly related to psychological distress and traumatic experience, programming approaches primarily focusing on improving psychosocial well-being and healing of the trauma generally entailed PSS. For example, INEE (2018) described the situation or problems that would necessitate the PSS approach; these were explained mostly with regard to psychological distress and traumatic experience:

> The uncertainty of their situation and the increasingly protracted nature of displacement, along with the day-to-day challenges of living and a lack of long-

> term solutions to their plight, puts young refugees and forcibly displaced persons at greater risk of suffering feelings of despair and hopelessness. . . . The type of stress a child experiences when exposed to a conflict or natural disaster can become toxic if there is intense, repeated, and extended activation of the body's stress-response system, particularly if there is no supportive adult figure to offer protection. (p. 7)

In responding to these problems, PSS approaches were aimed toward improving children's psychosocial well-being and resilience. For example, the EU (2019) described the role of education in response to traumatic experiences as follows: "Education offers a stable environment, structure, and routine that help heal, develop skills and behaviors that support resiliency, and provide opportunities to build relationships" (p. 36).

Whereas when the SEL approach was used, the problems children face in learning were also identified in addition to the problem of psychological distress. For example, "SEL supports the development of social and emotional competencies that strengthen academic performance and improve children's ability to navigate adversity" (INEE, 2018, p. 9). Organizations whose primary focus was on crisis-affected contexts used the concept of holistic learning, combining the aims of learning and well-being. For example, ECW (2021) stated, "MHPSS is part and parcel of quality education because children and adolescents will not be able to learn, and teachers will not be able to successfully support learners, if their mental health and well-being [are] not tended to and supported" (p. 2). According to INEE (2018) "many children and young people will likely be unable to learn to their full capacity" (p. 64). In this context the aim of SEL was to build competencies that would prepare children to learn. For example, UNICEF (2019b) described the aim of learning transferable skills as follows: to "cope with trauma, build resilience, which supports them to heal and be ready to learn" (p. 6).

Along with the objective of readiness to learn, another goal of SEL was also frequently appeared as behavior change of crisis-affected populations. The underlying assumption of the approach included the negative portrayal of crisis-affected children and youth, who may be a potential threat to the security of the donor countries. For example, according to UNICEF (2019b), children and youth exposed to prolonged adversity may develop a toxic stress, which may lead to long-term impact on children's behaviors. In response to this problem, transferable skills were framed to "prevent aggressive and conflict inducing behaviors" (p. 6). The UNICEF policy texts also discussed some long-term aims of transferable skills, including, social cohesion and longstanding peace. USAID (2018) education strategy makes a strong connection among SEL, potential behavior change, and children and youth's ability to resist violent extremism: Education was framed as a "critical tool to build resilience and reduce radicalization" and support young people to resist the "normalization of violence and violent extremism" (p. 31). ECW (2021) required country offices to measure outcomes of MHPSS, SEL, and PSS through "development of SEL competencies and behavior change" (p. 11).

In sum, the global policy texts revealed that SEL became a prominent approach only around 2018. Most of the organizations that used "SEL," or "social and emotional skills," as the representative term used CASEL's definition and tools developed in the United States. In the policy texts, "SEL" and related terminology were narrowly defined as skills and programming approaches that appeared technical and apolitical, focusing on individual-level skills building. Alongside related approaches, SEL emerged as new global policy solutions, addressing a learning crisis in stable contexts and psychological distress preventing to learn in crisis-affected contexts as major educational problems to

address. In crisis-affected contexts in the Global South, objectives of PSS programs included improving psychosocial well-being and healing of trauma and building resilience. The SEL approach was primarily intended for holistic learning by developing social and emotional competencies. The following section presents transnational–national humanitarian actors' conception of SEL and related approaches in practice based on the semi-structured interview data.

Transnational–National Actors

Transnational–national actors brought in SEL and PSS terms, programming materials, measurement tools to Lebanon, most often after adapting their respective global program models and frameworks. The decontextualized SEL and PSS as global solutions were, therefore, recontextualized to address problems facing crisis-affected children and youth in Lebanon. This group of policy actors demonstrated varying degrees of understanding of SEL and related education approaches, most notably depending on whether or not a key informant was engaged in the USAID-funded QITABI 2 project. For the non-QITABI 2 interviewees, "PSS" had been a dominant term and approach, mostly in NFE settings, while SEL gradually emerged as a promising approach with the QITABI 2 project.

The main problems PSS programs identified as critical to address had evolved over time, however, from war and displacement-induced trauma in the earlier phases to violence at home and daily stressors like poverty for the past few years. PSS was mostly associated with the Syrian refugee population but more recently considered to be applicable to all vulnerable people, including the Lebanese after COVID-19, the Beirut Blast, and the financial crisis. SEL in contrast, was introduced to address problems

related to low quality teaching and learning at public schools. The objective of SEL programming, therefore, was to improve the quality of the teaching and learning environment of the national education system. The objective of the PSS programs was consistently described as psychosocial well-being and healing of trauma.

Findings about transnational–national actors are based primarily on the analysis of data from 23 interviews with both non-Lebanese and Lebanese professionals working at UN agencies, bilateral or multilateral donor agencies, and INGOs, in addition to five secondary qualitative interview transcripts. Table 5 summarizes the themes that emerged regarding the similarities and differences SEL and PSS approaches in Lebanon based on the data from semi-structured interviews with transnational–national actors. Further details appear in the following subsection.

As in the previous section on the global policy texts, I first review how the key informants conceptualized SEL and related approaches. I then examine how the key informants described the educational problems SEL was intended to address and the objectives of these approaches.

Conceptualization of SEL and Related Approaches

For transnational–national actors, "SEL" and "PSS" were the most frequently used terms representing nonacademic education and child protection programming for children and youth that promotes well-being and resilience. Both approaches were perceived as internationally funded projects in NFE settings that were not necessarily organically part of the Lebanese education system. QITABI 2 project was mentioned as an exception in which a national SEL framework was developed in the formal education system although it was also an internationally funded initiative.

Table 5

Similarities and Differences Between PSS and SEL Described by Transnational–National Actors

	PSS	SEL
They are the same concepts, not different. (mostly non-QITABI 2 key informants)	• Embedded into different education programs (No explicit definition mentioned) • They are in practice similar activities (e.g., emotion regulations and some skills building) • Both can specifically tackle certain child protection issues, including violence at home, bullying, various forms of abuse	
They are different concepts (mostly QITABI 2 -related key informants)	• Emergency context • Short-term, structured activities • Various levels of PSS, including focused PSS for those who need referrals and a community-based PSS with more universal approach • More likely in community-based settings or NFE settings, in education contexts • Originally only for Syrian refugees, now applicable for all population in short-term	• Ongoing development context • Long-term, mostly in formal education settings • Linked directly to learning • Whole-child approach, systematic approach to teaching and learning, including pedagogy, curriculum, teacher professional development • For all vulnerable children

In the transnational–national actor group of key informants, the conceptualization of SEL and related approaches predominantly focused on similarities and differences between SEL and PSS. A more widely used term and programming approach used by the group of key informants had been "PSS," and "SEL" was considered a recent development. Those who were engaged with the USAID-funded QITABI 2 project could articulate similarities and differences between SEL and PSS, but most of the key informants who were not directly involved with the QITABI 2 project perceived the two approaches as similar or could not explain the differences.

Whether SEL or PSS, a majority of key informants commonly reported no consistent definition or understanding of the concepts across humanitarian actors in Lebanon. An INGO key informant articulated such conflicting use of the terms the informant experienced across humanitarian organizations in Lebanon:

> I don't think there is a shared understanding on SEL–PSS. Up until the INEE Background Paper and PSS guidelines were issued, there was a total confusion. . . . Everybody was saying, we do SEL, we do PSS. . . . I remember at one point that these people came in and they started to do some exercise and said, "We are actually doing SEL, aren't we?" (INGO1, personal communication, December 4, 2020)

The same informant even described the confusion within the same INGO: "There is a debate also between myself and my line manager around PSS and SEL" (INGO1, personal communication, December 4, 2020). Even the key informants who were able to articulate the differences between SEL and PSS emphasized there was no common understanding within the education sector partners.

As described in Table 5, numerous informants mentioned that practitioners in Lebanon used SEL and PSS interchangeably and saw little difference between the two approaches. One of the UN agency staff members perceived that SEL and PSS were interchangeably used because of the limited experience and technical capacity of humanitarian actors in Lebanon:

> I think they are interchangeably used. The understanding for education actors of these two concepts in Lebanon is more or less limited because many do not implement stand-alone PSS or SEL programs. It's embedded into different education activities that we have in place. And it depends on the capacity also of an organization, their technical knowledge and experience in the implementation of similar programs and so on. So I don't think we have a harmonized definition of SEL and PSS across the sector, and we just have a very generic guidance. (UND3, personal communication, January 25, 2021)

Other informants also confirmed that SEL and PSS were understood and used similarly.

One of the QITABI key informants further added nuance to the interchangeability of SEL and PSS as a very recent phenomenon: "SEL is just a very recent development. Until recently, it wasn't used interchangeably. It was just PSS. And then when SEL came, people just said, SEL and PSS are the same" (QITABI1, personal Communication, December 14, 2020). She explained that humanitarian actors had used only PSS but suddenly began to treat SEL the same as PSS because they did not understand the difference. Notably, in NFE settings in Lebanon, most humanitarian actors, besides IRC, had called their programming approaches PSS; key informants explained that confusion ensued because others focused on the activities level without considering their purposes and how they were designed.

When I asked for definitions of SEL, those who specified their perspectives on it generally referred to SEL–PSS global policy scripts, such as INEE's (2016) Background Paper on PSS and SEL for Children and Youth in Emergency Settings, its Guidance Note on Psychosocial Support (INEE, 2018), or CASEL's SEL framework, or definitions of SEL from individual organization's global headquarters. For example, an INGO key informant described INEE (2018):

> It is our Bible. Because PSS and SEL are always together, there was a big confusion. Now, when we argue—and we still argue whether it is PSS or SEL—but now we at least have this document. It is peace of mind. (INGO1, personal communication, December 3, 2020)

Similarly, another INGO key informant explained that "PSS programs I manage focus on internal emotional regulations. For a program to be qualified as SEL, it needs to tackle all five domains of the CASEL framework" (INGO8, personal communication, January 19,

2021). The transnational–national actors' conception and definition of SEL and PSS were therefore largely consistent with global policy texts.

Because PSS was a more universally used term and programming approach than SEL in Lebanon, those who provided their unique definitions and perspectives on SEL also often noted its similarities and differences with PSS. For individuals who perceived SEL and PSS as different concepts and approaches, the most commonly mentioned difference was that PSS was a short-term approach for acute emergencies and SEL was a long-term, development-focused approach directly linked to learning processes. One of the QITABI-related informants explained how her organization defined and applied PSS and SEL while referring to the INEE (2016) definitions:

> SEL is an approach that we use that's generalized for all students in a classroom. PSS is an approach that we use more specifically for students who just had some adverse experience. PSS is the specific program that you want to do for those children right after the adversity. The programs are going to address how they felt during that crisis or what happened. That's a core difference. (INGO2, personal communication, December 18, 2020)

Other informants who were involved in the QITABI 2 project reaffirmed similar understandings that PSS was for emergency contexts, and SEL was for ongoing development settings: "PSS helps children to change their ideas specifically in the emergency contexts while SEL is building a specific skill linked to the psych status of the child but also the learning component that is taking place" (INGO5, personal communication, January 8, 2021). SEL was understood as a year-round, ongoing support in classrooms when PSS takes place when there is a crisis and when specialized or focused interventions were necessary. Therefore, PSS was almost exclusively used for Syrian refugees, while SEL was used for vulnerable Lebanese children and youth. Since

2020, PSS had been used for both populations for short-term, focused approaches in response to the multiple recent crises.

In addition, a few other key informants perceived that SEL was more appropriate for use in formal education settings because it was more directly related to learning. For example, an INGO key informant said, "Compared to PSS or life skills, SEL is more introduced in formal education settings" (INGO9, personal communication, January 25, 2021). Another INGO key informant stated, "The particularity of SEL is that it is linked directly to the learning process and to the learning space and with the learning providers" (INGO5, personal communication, January 5, 2021). Besides, quite a few general education focal persons believed SEL is more "technical" compared to PSS, but these statements were made based on their own perceptions: "SEL has more of a technical background to it. PSS, everyone would do, would just say, we are doing PSS" (INGO10, personal communication, March 11, 2021). Some INGO key informants echoed the sentiment that SEL requires more technical knowledge than PSS, reflecting the technocratic and depoliticized approach to SEL found in the global policy texts.

Those who were involved in the QITABI 2 project at the global and national levels were largely consistent with one another and with the project's school-wide, systematic SEL approach described in the QITABI 2 project design document. SEL was described as pedagogy, curriculum, classroom and school culture, and an education policy that supports the broader social and emotional development of children beyond academic teaching and learning. One of the key informants described the need to focus on SEL in Lebanon and the schoolwide approach in the QITABI 2 project:

> Our culture is very traditional when it comes to education. It's very limited. Everybody is so focused on the content. If we didn't have the social and

> emotional part, it would have just remained content. . . . SEL is the pedagogy, it's the way that you teach. It's the way you communicate with kids. It's the way you relate to kids. It's the way you make the lessons smooth and interactive and engaging. . . . It's changing the mindset of people. . . . I want that to become the norm so that it becomes the culture of the curriculum. The way you think about developing a curriculum, the way you teach lessons, the way you interact with children, the school culture, how you engage parents, and how you train teachers. (QITABI1, personal communication, December 14, 2020)

The QITABI key informants called this approach an "ecosystem approach," in which they hoped to integrate SEL approaches into the system.

To further delineate the key informants' understanding of the education approaches that support holistic learning and well-being in Lebanon and how organizations had built on similar education programs, humanitarian actors were more likely to relate it to education projects funded by foreign donors. When asked about similarities and differences of the SEL–PSS approach to other related education approaches, *transnational–national actors* most commonly mentioned that a related education concept was life skills education. A key informant described some of the common competencies in their life skills and SEL programs or approaches as "student-based committees which targeted building responsible decision making, relationship building, and social awareness" (INGO1, personal communication, December 3, 2020). An lNGO key actor also explained the similar competencies promoted in SEL and peace education as "conflict resolution, prosocial behavior, prosocial attitudes, problem solving, communication skills" (QITABI1, personal communication, December 14, 2020). Generally, there was a consensus that some aspects of different education approaches shared some commonalities, but predominant labels in recent years have been SEL and PSS. Life skills program was also popular for youth populations.

Based on the understanding of how the transnational–national humanitarian actors conceptualized and defined SEL (mostly in comparison to PSS, but also other related education projects), the following section focuses on transnational–national actors' perspectives on the educational problems SEL–PSS was intended to address.

Educational Problems SEL–PSS Was Intended to Address

Transnational–national actors most commonly identified psychological distress and child protection-related issues, including child labor and violence at home, as main problems SEL and PSS programs was intended to address in NFE settings. As the SEL approach moved into the formal education system with QITABI 2 project, low-quality teaching and learning and poor learning environments in public schools were the main problems the SEL approach was intended to address. The population of focus for PSS programs, both in NFE and formal education, had somewhat consistently comprised Syrian refugee children; and objectives were often described as psychological well-being and the healing of trauma; however, key informants differentiated the problems of trauma in earlier phases of the Syrian refugee influx resulting from displacement to daily stressors, including violence at home or widespread poverty in recent years as described in Table 6 below. The educational problems SEL–PSS was intended to address in Lebanon and program objectives evolved over time across the four phases identified in Chapter 4: emergence of PSS in NFE programs (2011–2014), institutionalization of PSS and proliferation of PSS in NFE (2014–2017), institutionalization of SEL–PSS (2017–present), and the institutionalization of PSS in crisis (2020–present). Table 6 summarizes the evolution of the educational problems SEL–PSS was intended to address and program

objectives over time across the transnational–national actors who participated in this study. Additional details are elaborated below.

Table 6

Evolution of the Educational Problems SEL-PSS Was Intend to Address and Program Objectives

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Predominant terminology	PSS	PSS	PSS and SEL	PSS and SEL
Target population	Syrian refugees	Syrian refugees	• PSS for Syrian refugees • SEL for vulnerable Lebanese	• SEL-PSS for all vulnerable populations in Lebanon
Education programming approaches	Humanitarian approach	Humanitarian and security approach	• Humanitarian approach for refugees • Development approach for vulnerable Lebanese	• Humanitarian, development, and resilience approaches for all vulnerable population
Educational problems identified	Psychological distress, trauma, and mental health-related issues (war and displacement related)	Psychological distress, trauma, and mental health-related issues (war and displacement related)	• Psychological distress, child protection issues for refugees • Low quality teaching and learning environment in public schools	• Psychological distress because of multiple emergencies, including financial crisis, Beirut Blast, COVID-19 for all Lebanese
Objectives of SEL-PSS	Psychosocial well-being	Psychosocial well-being	• Psychosocial well-being for refugees • Improve quality of education at the national level	• Psychosocial well-being for entire population

Echoing the shift of the educational problems over time, an INGO staff member further described the problems and objectives their PSS project was designed to address: It focused more on daily stressors than the impact of actual displacement compared to earlier years. She said:

> Our PSS programs aim to improve the well-being of students. I meant by well-being, how to help students overcome the challenges they are facing each day with their families. In the Bekaa area, Syrian students and families are living in tents. They have a really bad living conditions. Sometimes, more than one family is living in a same tent. They are very poor, and they face many problems like early marriage and violence. (INGO7, personal communication, January 12, 2021)

Another key informant reflected similarly on the initial focus on Syrian refugee students' psychological distress. Some of the key informants mentioned that if they could better attend to the well-being of teachers and humanitarian staff members, they could in turn better address children's psychological distress (INGO10, personal communication, March 11, 2021). Several other transnational–national actors reaffirmed their more recent approach of attending to teacher and humanitarian practitioners' psychosocial needs.

Consensus emerged across interviewees that PSS interventions were now applicable for all people in Lebanon, not only refugees, because of the multiple crises that the country had faced, including political revolution, financial crisis, the Beirut Blast, and the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the key informants spoke of the evolution of her organization's approach to PSS over time:

> At first, we had the Syrian refugee crisis that needed a lot of psychosocial support. Now, there are also the most vulnerable Lebanese children because we have been living in a very difficult situation across the years, and now within the last year and a half, we had the revolution, we had the economic crisis, we had the Beirut blast. We had the COVID-19. . . . We do focus on any the population living within the countries, whether it's Lebanese, Syrian, Palestinian, any person within

> the country that is vulnerable. (UND1, personal communication, January 12, 2021)

Multiple key informants similarly indicated the shift of focus of their approaches from exclusively Syrian refugees to all vulnerable populations.

Although the education problems faced by crisis-affected children, family, and teachers evolved over time, SEL–PSS programming approaches described by transnational–national actors, particularly in the NFE settings, were based on the globally designed approaches with some adaptation to context in Lebanon. INGOs often had global program models and SEL–PSS teaching and learning materials, frequently decontextualized from other crisis-affected contexts in the Global South and then adapted to the context in Lebanon. For example, an NRC key informant spoke about how Better Learning Programme became institutionalized in Lebanon:

> BLP [Better Learning Programme] 3 package was originally developed for recovering child soldiers, starting with a cognitive behavioral therapy approach, in Uganda 12 years ago. And then, it was heavily adapted in terms of language and concepts when being used in Gaza and the West Bank since 2011. There, we also developed another BLP [Better Learning Programme] package where we just focus on the coping skills and body and stress awareness in Arabic. So, we utilized those Arabic materials we had from that Palestinian experience, and we adapted in the Lebanese context. (INGO8, personal communication, January 19, 2021)

A similar approach was also noted by IRC, where a SEL-infused Healing Classroom program model was implemented in NFE settings around 2014. NFE facilitators were trained on IRC's SEL programming approach, its global SEL framework and skills, scripted SEL lesson plans as well as scope and sequence (IRC Lebanon, 2016).

For those who were involved with the USAID-supported QITABI 2 project, problems the SEL approach was intended to address differed from those focusing on PSS

approaches described earlier. The predominant discourse of this group of key informants dealt with the overall low quality of teaching and learning in public schools, mainly for Lebanese students. Public schools in Lebanon were often attended by those who came from the lower socioeconomic stratum in Lebanon (Abdul-Hamid & Yassine, 2020). The objectives of SEL programming, therefore, were to improve the quality of the teaching and learning environment of the national education system. One of the QITABI 2 key informants described the problems and objectives of the SEL approach:

> How have schools in Lebanon supported social and emotional development? The level at which it's happening is very much at the individual level because it is not part of the curriculum. It depends on who your teacher is and what kind of leadership you have within that school to support children's social and emotional development. The curriculum itself is very traditional. The pedagogy is very traditional, and there is just no time to turn to children's basic needs, to turn to children's social and emotional needs. (QITABI 1, personal communication, December 14, 2020)

Other QITABI 2 project key informants similarly identified the overall low-quality education in public schools. The QITABI 2 project conceptualized SEL as a means to improve reading outcomes in the early grades as a major objective, but a majority of key informants prioritized improving the protective and child-friendly learning environment. Although QITABI 2 project had undertaken a more rigorous contextualization process than the previously discussed INGO programs, the whole-school approach of SEL was also a borrowed policy idea from CASEL, expanding the Eurocentric conception of SEL as a global solution.

In sum, transnational–national actors largely shared their understanding on SEL and PSS as defined by their respective global headquarters or the knowledge bodies in the United States, such as CASEL and INEE. The global solutions were introduced and

adopted by transnational–national actors in Lebanon to address local problems. Key informants believed a difference between SEL and PSS was unclear across education sector in Lebanon. PSS had been a predominant approach in NFE that aimed to improve the psychosocial well-being of affected children. The major problems these programs addressed evolved from psychosocially distressed Syrian refugee children resulting from the traumatic experiences emanating from war and displacement to refugee children facing daily violence and stressors, then finally to all vulnerable people who experienced multiple crises. SEL, in contrast, was understood as a recent development primarily aimed to address low- quality teaching and learning and less than child-friendly environments in the public schools. The following section covers the conceptualization of SEL and related education approaches, educational problems SEL–PSS was intended to address, and objectives of the programs perceived by national policy-makers.

National Policy-Makers

Findings at the national policy-maker level are based on the analysis of data from interviews with four key informants working under the auspices of the minister of education, including two MEHE staff members, a CERD staff member, and a Lebanese University faculty member. Consistent with the previous sections, I first review how the key informants conceptualized SEL and related approaches. I then examine how the national policy-makers described the educational problems SEL–PSS was intended to address and objectives of the programs.

Conceptualization of SEL and Related Approaches

National policy-makers strategically adopted the global SEL and PSS discourses to be aligned with transnational–national actors and to accommodate multiple donors, but

actively recontextualized the contents to fit their own needs and priorities. Thus, unlike transnational–national actors, who mainly differentiated PSS as a solution to address psychosocial distress of Syrian refugee populations and SEL as a solution for addressing low-quality teaching and learning in schools, national policy-makers instead conceptualized SEL as a "preventive PSS." With the child protection policy framing, SEL and PSS were conceptualized to reduce violence in schools.

National policy-makers who were interviewed provided a variety of and somewhat inconsistent understandings and elaborations on SEL and PSS, depending on the extent of their engagement with the initiatives for SEL institutionalization. All mentioned that despite the existence of similar approaches and activities for decades in Lebanon in NFE settings, the terms "SEL" and "PSS" were introduced by transnational–national actors. USAID-funded projects—D-RASATI 2 and QITABI 2—were specifically mentioned as instrumental in introducing the terminology into the formal education system. All Lebanese ministerial key informants articulated their understandings of SEL and PSS with slightly different foci. On one end, the DOPS key informant, who had been leading the national SEL framework and UNICEF-supported Child Protection Policy in School, was able to actively put together SEL, PSS, and child protection approaches to better complement one another. On the other end, a PMU manager who institutionalized PSS sessions at second-shift schools for Syrian refugee students preferred to skip the questions to speak about her understanding of PSS and SEL because she perceived the question too "technical."

Both DOPS and CERD key informants shared a similar conceptualization of SEL and PSS with QITABI-related transnational–national actors. SEL was understood as a

term appropriate to denote improving the quality of teaching and learning holistically from a long-term perspective. PSS was perceived as a short-term response approach, yet each entity had a somewhat different focus on operationalizing SEL approaches at the school level. DOPS, as a leading department implementing the education minister-endorsed Child Protection Policy in Schools, conceptualized SEL and PSS within a broader vision of the child protection framework, a policy already endorsed by the minister of education in 2018. SEL was, therefore, conceptualized as a "preventive PSS" for general school populations, ultimately contributing to nonviolent school environments. Figure 5 indicates the DOPS key informant's vision of institutionalizing SEL–PSS within a child protection framework, which I created based on the interview data[30]. CERD, the focal point for curriculum and teacher training, elaborated mainly the organization's interest in integrating SEL into teacher training modules and eventually also into curricula.

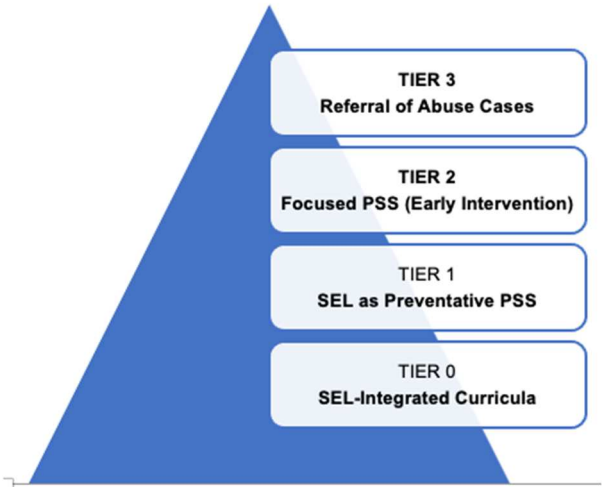
The Lebanese university faculty member, who runs teacher education programs, emphasized the importance of integrating SEL into preservice teacher training curricula at higher education institutions and ultimately into the curricula. She elaborated her understanding of SEL as the teachers' attention to children's social and emotional needs, not focusing only on teaching academic content. She also connected SEL with other global initiatives and terminology, including SDGs and 21st-century skills.

[30] I did a validity check of Figure 5 with the DOPS key informant. At the time of this writing, DOPS used a three-tiered model without Tier 0, SEL-integrated curricula, therefore, allowing and confirming my own visualization as accurately capturing the long-term vision.

The PMU manager, who included a weekly PSS session at afternoon shift schools, was familiar only with the term PSS but did not speak about its difference from SEL.

Figure 5

Visualization of a MEHE Key Informant's Conception of SEL–PSS



The PMU key informant described PSS from the perspective of behavior change and suspected SEL as a recent development of a similar approach with USAID funding. The following subsection discusses the educational problems SEL–PSS was intended to address, and objectives of the programs as perceived by national policy-makers.

Educational Problems SEL–PSS Was Intended to Address

National policy-makers shared understanding with transnational–national actors in that PSS was used in response to a psychosocial distress caused by crisis, but SEL was used in improving education issues in Lebanese public schools. All national policy-makers emphasized that Lebanese people were just as vulnerable as Syrian refugees; thus, donor support for SEL–PSS should not focus only on Syrian refugee students. All

four national policy-makers described the multiple crises the country had faced, including the financial crises and COVID-19 as the key contextual problems PSS approaches were designed to address. For example, one of the MEHE key informants reflected on the problems they faced more recently as well as the ministry's efforts to digitize brief PSS activities in collaboration with the QITABI 2 project:

> Not only COVID, but we are suffering. Everybody lost their families, work, and are facing a lot of hard things, so we have to support people. We have to make sure that they stay strong, to stay positive. It's not easy, but it's a part of our work to attend [to] people, parents. That's why we made PSS videos to support them. (NP2, personal communications, January 23, 2021)

For the PMU manager who had been responsible for second shift schools for Syrian refugee children, the problems PSS approaches had addressed in earlier years changed. She illustrated the behavioral challenges she noticed in Syrian refugee students from the outset, reasoning those explained why PSS sessions were offered at second shift schools. She now believed that similar behavioral challenges and needs were occurring among Lebanese students affected by the recent financial crises as well and that similar support would be helpful for the vulnerable Lebanese:

> At the beginning of the crisis—2013 or 2014—Syrian children were shy. They were unable to speak. They never raised their hands. There were no discipline [problems] among them. [That's why we introduced PSS sessions for Syrians]. Now, we are witnessing a lot of betraying, a lot of divorce, a lot of mistreating among [both Syrian and Lebanese] families, all because of economic and social situation. So even the Lebanese are in need of such support lately. (NP1, personal communication, December 28, 2020)

The DOPS manager responsible for the training of psychosocial counselors who frequently visited schools to provide support spoke of the lack of school-based financial and human resource support and awareness of psychosocial issues and child protection issues as primary challenges for SEL–PSS to address:

> There is no school-based psychosocial counselor in Lebanese schools. My team moves from one school to another and gives the support. They mainly tackle the awareness and the referral and response, meaning they only intervene with some severe cases reported. We don't have yet much awareness and understanding of teachers—how they could prevent and detect social emotional learning and mental health issues early. (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2021)

Explaining the situation as a lack of systemic supports, she believed the new SEL–PSS approaches would serve as a longer-term vision and goal. This key informant hoped the lessons learned in school-based second shift schools would trigger a similar approach in all public schools. She envisioned having a school-based counselor in each school would enable the notion of a "whole-school approach" in building SEL competencies in the children and would "be the key to institutionalize the approach at the school to ensure sustainability" (NP3, personal communication, March 27, 2021). Next, paralleling the national policy-makers' conceptualizations of SEL–PSS approaches, I present national–local actors' conceptualizations of SEL–PSS and their description of the problems SEL–PSS approaches was intended to address in the next subsection.

National–Local Actors

This section describes the national and local actors' definitions and conceptualizations of SEL and related approaches as well as educational problems SEL–PSS approaches was intended to address. The themes identified in this section are based on data from semi-structured interviews conducted with two national NGO practitioners, two local NGO practitioners, two teacher educators at private higher education institutions, and 15 teachers. The first subsection explains how the key informants understood SEL and related approaches, and then the next subsection describes the

educational problems SEL–PSS approaches was intended to address and the programs' objectives.

Conceptualization of SEL and Related Approaches

Most national–local actors had not heard about the term "SEL." Still, those who worked with transnational organizations as their implementing partners were all familiar with the term "PSS," but understanding and application varied across the organizations. All attributed the popularity of PSS to transnational actors, and all but one of them started PSS programming because of donor influence. One exception was a large national NGO specializing in child protection and child abuse; this organization had already used the term PSS before expanding PSS programming after the Syrian refugee influx because of international donor priorities. Unlike many other key informants, one working for this large national NGO said, "PSS was already used in my organization. But now, all local NGOs and INGOs work in the same way when it comes to PSS. There is a PSS committee in Lebanon that sets the requirements, rules, conditions, and everything" (NNGO2, personal communication, March 9, 2021). The role and authority of the PSS committee within the Lebanon Crisis Response Inter-Agency Coordination structure described by the NNGO2 key informant was somewhat different from that of an INGO key informant, who perceived the PSS Committee's power to streamline PSS programming in Lebanon still limited (INGO10, personal communication, March 11, 2021).

Among the more local-level actors, including small-scale Lebanese NGOs and teachers, both PSS and SEL—the terms and the approaches—were generally unfamiliar compared to transnational–national actors and national policy-makers. Key informants

working for small-scale Lebanese NGOs and teachers who did not work for INGO-run NFE centers generally had a somewhat limited understanding of the concepts. For example, when asked to define PSS or SEL, a local NGO staff member managing a community-based NFE center for Syrian refugee children described it as a set of activities that aimed to achieve nonacademic objectives:

> With our PSS sessions, we introduce and discuss topics like child rights, bullying, self-confidence, violence, how to accept others, that kind of things. These topics were introduced as part of the session, once a week during the classes like other subjects. During the summer program, the PSS sessions were provided every day. (LNGO2, personal communication, February 7, 2021)

For those who did not have their own global program models like larger INGOs, the description of PSS programs was often limited to a set of activities to teach the concepts and knowledge pertinent to child protection related themes.

National–local actors, particularly university faculty members and teachers tended to relate SEL–PSS concepts with existing subjects in the Lebanese curricula, most commonly with civics. The life skills approach was also mentioned by a large national NGO key informant; she found "how to solve problems, have nonviolent communication and decision making" as common competencies with a PSS approach (NNGO2, personal communications, March 9, 2021). A few informants mentioned some of program approaches that promote peace and peaceful coexistence as relevant to SEL or PSS programming. For example, one of the local NGO actors who currently implemented PSS programming described some of the common competencies that they now promoted in the program, including "express feelings, resolve conflict, cooperation, honesty"; these were similar to the peace education program they had implemented before the Syrian refugee crisis (LNGO1, personal communication, December 17, 2020). Another local

NGO offered programs for Lebanese students in both public and private schools and Syrian refugee students in NFE settings, where they focused on peaceful coexistence and religious diversity. The program was described as follows: "They are learning how to be together when it's a religiously mixed school. When it's not, they are learning about the Other and meeting the Other" (NNGO1, personal communication, January 5, 2021). There was a diverse understanding and use of SEL and the related approaches among national–local actors and SEL or PSS were not the representative terms used.

Some teachers stated that the subject of civics in the formal education system shares some commonalities with SEL–PSS approaches. One teacher said:

> Whenever I am discussing the issue of accepting others, regardless of their color, religion, opinion, political parties with students, they always tell me that they also discuss it with the civics teacher, so they know about it. But the only difference—that's in class— you have to do quizzes; and you have to do tests, and you are assessed. But in my extracurricular club I am leading, it's a fun way of doing it and [the] activities we are doing are like role-playing. So, the NGO gave us training before delivering the course to the students. So yeah, it's a course, but it's done in a fun, fun way. (T-Private2, personal communication, January 8, 2021)

Similarly, key informants perceived PSS or related education approaches were different from school subjects that students had to be examined on. A teacher said: "We have a certain intersection between the topics like students' rights—between the psychosocial support and civics. But at school, they don't focus a lot" (T-NFE1, personal communication, March 26, 2021). In the next subsection, the descriptions of the key educational problems that SEL–PSS programs were designed to address are explored.

Educational Problems SEL–PSS Was Intended to Address

For national and local actors who implemented for transnational–national organizations, the educational problems PSS was intended to address were not much

different from those cited by transnational–national actors. Such key informants focused strongly on psychological impact and distress caused by multiple crises in Lebanon, including the Syrian refugee influx, revolution, financial crisis, and COVID-19. For others who had more focused mandate as an organization, educational problems SEL–PSS was intended to address were more diverse, depending on the focus of the organizations' programs. Most of the teachers were unfamiliar with either SEL or PSS and therefore, did not use the terms.

One of the teachers believed the SEL–PSS approach would be useful because of the multiple crises that Lebanon faced, and that the aim of the teachers would be to provide support for these students and provide them with hope and advice. She said:

> We are living in this country that is collapsing now. But at the same time, with our core teachers that we are trying to show support for students. We try to tell them that we've been through difficult times before and things will eventually get better. Because we had maybe, you know, the older generation—we've been through times of war where, you know, we had Israeli aggressions where, for example, in the year 2006, half of Beirut was destroyed by Israeli attacks. . .So it was very important for us to create this mood among our students that no matter how tough things appear to be at the moment, they should not stop dreaming. (T-Public-AM1, personal communication, January 26, 2021)

Other teachers also noted that the current "political crisis, and pandemic may be good reasons for them to change." This may be the right moment to change to the SEL-PSS approach, and the aim would be "to do what other countries are doing" (T-Public-PM1, personal communication, February 2, 2021). Although these teachers were unaware of PSS as a term or as an approach, they imagined it would be helpful in crisis-affected situations. Some teachers who were teaching Syrian refugee students perceived that the main problems that the SEL–PSS approach could address were peer violence and bullying among Syrian refugee students attending second shifts.

Depending on the thematic focus of the organizations, the ways that the PSS approach was practiced were not all identical; they varied somewhat. For example, a national NGO focusing on child abuse described issues and concerns about child protection, abuse, and bullying; and the problem was the lack of awareness of child abuse issues in the general Lebanese public on these matters:

> It is different concerning the target population; for example, if I'm talking about children, I want them to know what is abuse, that they have the right to say no to abuse, to whom they can refer if they are facing any risk. … I can say we help them be stronger, help them build their personality and be able to say no to any kind of abuse and seek help. Concerned parents may be the same. It's like—and telling them that abuse is not a form of love because it's—maybe in the Middle East—it's like a way of discipline or a way of raising children. So we help them know that this is not acceptable. (NNGO2, personal communication, March 9, 2021)

Other key informants spoke about various problems each program intend to address. The key informant working with the organization promoting peaceful coexistence and religious diversity spoke specifically about the diverse religious backgrounds of the Lebanese population and how that created the culture of prejudice against others with different religions and caused conflict:

> Private schools in Lebanon belong to different communities. You have a few secular schools, but the rest are Sunni, Shiite, Druze, Maronite, Orthodox, Protestant. So for us, it's very important to have one, at least one of each of those. . . . Our program aims to teach a little bit about Christianity and Islam. As they learn about the perception of each religion of each other, they learn about the question of history and the memory and how as communities they learn about nonviolent communication, how to how to listen, how to communicate, how to understand what they have said with typical images how they have generalizations and all of these things. And once they learn all of this in parallel, they would be meeting students that age from a different school, a different background, and a different religion. (NNGO1, personal communication, January 5, 2021)

Some teachers were concerned that the Lebanese education system only focused on academic learning in schools and particularly assessment results. They believed approaches involving well-being could be useful in addressing problems by aiming to build competencies that would be useful in succeeding in life. For example, one of the public school teachers said:

> I can find a lot of students who [are] excellent academically. When it comes to life—they are very shy. They don't know how to speak. They don't know how to interact with the students. They are always alone, and they are not involved as a society. … They don't trust themselves. You know, so this is what I'm concerned. It's very good to be excellent in the curriculum, but at the same time, we should build [their] personalities. (T-Public-PM2, personal communications, January 30, 2021)

For this teacher, the aim of the SEL approach was to engage children during her class and to teach content that mattered to them. In terms of engaging students through teaching, she described how she did so in practice:

> When I give students time to speak, I sit between them. I never stand at the board unless I want to write. But when reading a lesson, I sit with them, also when we are having activities. I look at their copy books, and they are around me. I'm sitting in the middle, between them, and this is how I look. They need to feel safe with me. (T-Public-PM2, personal communications, January 30, 2021)

The teacher emphasized how the teaching practice known as child-centered pedagogy is used to emotionally engage with students. National–local actors demonstrated a range of understanding of SEL–PSS and related education approaches as well as the problems such programs were intended to address. The next subsection summarizes the findings from the vertical–transversal comparison before proceeding to the horizontal–transversal comparison.

Summary of the Vertical–Transversal Comparison

The first part of the chapter focused on the vertical–transversal comparison across the four different levels—global policy texts, transnational–national actors, national policy-makers and national–local actors—examining how SEL and related terminology were defined and understood and how the educational problems SEL and PSS approaches were intended to address evolved over time. The analysis revealed some variation in understanding and focus of the concepts across the levels of policy texts and actors. The critical qualitative content analysis of 21 global policy texts showed that SEL and PSS had become an important global solution on the policy agenda in both crisis-affected and stable settings in the Global South to improve learning and well-being, thus achieving the goal of quality education in the era of SDGs. PSS was introduced as a programming approach aiming to address psychosocial distress resulting from protracted exposure to crises. In contrast, the objective of SEL was to improve academic and life outcomes in general, but in crisis-affected settings, to support the holistic learning of children. SEL and PSS in the global policy texts were generally perceived as measurable learning outcomes and skills, therefore, constructed as technical and depoliticized solutions focusing on individual-level skills building.

Data from transnational–national actors demonstrated the evolution of prominent discourses over the past 10 years, from PSS to SEL, the overall shift from the humanitarian approach (PSS) to the development–resilience approach (SEL) in education programming. With the recent multifaceted crises, PSS recaptured interest while SEL discourse also continued, resonating more with the resilience approach. The target population of the programming approaches also moved from Syrian refugees alone to Syrian refugees and vulnerable host Lebanese children and then to all vulnerable students

attending public schools regardless of nationality. PSS had been a predominant approach, addressing the psychosocial distress of crisis-affected children; and SEL had become a recent development in both formal and NFE settings. Both approaches and concepts were introduced based on the frameworks and tools available in respective organizations' headquarters and United States-based institutions like CASEL.

PSS had always aimed at improving the psychosocial well-being of children, but the problem shifted from war-related trauma to daily stressors and violence at home for Syrian refugee children. More recently, problems focused on multifaceted crises and their impact on people's daily lives, including Lebanese students and youth. Where PSS focused on systematically addressing the social and emotional development needs and the well-being of children, SEL had a wider focus: It was introduced to improve the whole school culture with the USAID- and the NYU TIES-sponsored initiatives. The poor quality of teaching and learning and the nonchild-friendly environment in public schools were cited as key problems to be addressed with SEL. Thus, the aim of SEL was to improve the quality of teaching and the relationship between teachers and students and to foster a SEL-infused school culture.

National policy-makers used SEL–PSS terms as they were introduced by USAID-funded projects to align with international donors but also actively recontextualized the contents of such approaches to fit their own needs and priorities. Both PSS and SEL initiatives were framed in a broader child protection policy as different degrees of preventive and referral support to protect children from violence.

The national–local actors implementing international donor-supported projects shared similar understandings of the PSS approaches, but no key informants were

familiar with the term "SEL." Teachers and university faculty key informants often conceptualized SEL–PSS with existing school subjects, such as civics and extracurricular activities offered at the schools. National–local NGO key informants focused on addressing their organizations' expertise, such as child protection and religious diversity; therefore, the conceptualization of SEL and related approaches at this level were much more diverse than those perceived by transnational–national actors. Understanding how discourses on SEL–PSS differed across the multiple levels but how actors at the same level, teachers at the local level, understood SEL differently based on their specific locales is the subject of the following sections. Next, the findings from the horizontal–transversal comparison across types of teachers are presented to delineate the various complex problems faced by teachers and how SEL-PSS might unfold differently across the contexts.

Horizontal-Transversal Comparison

Horizontally, the analysis focused on comparing teachers in various types of schools. Of the 15 teachers I interviewed, five teachers taught at public schools, including three teachers who also taught second shifts for Syrian refugee students; four teachers taught at private schools, and six teachers taught at NGO-run NFE centers operating for Syrian refugee students. Although I intended to make the horizontal comparison across school types, it is important to acknowledge that individual schools in each category were likely to operate in a vastly different situations, depending on where they were located—urban, peri-urban, or rural—and their level of access to external funding and resources. The horizontal comparison by school type is, therefore, by no means intended to generalize beyond these individual teachers and schools. Thus, the comparison focuses

more on the perspectives of teachers working at different types of schools but not necessarily with the type of school as a unit of analysis.

Although the public school teachers had some exposure to SEL–PSS terminology and approaches, none of them reported that they had an explicit system to integrate and support children's social and emotional development beyond individual teachers' responsibilities. The public school teachers at both first- and second-shift schools were reviewed in turn. Then, teachers at private schools had some mixed understandings of the SEL–PSS approach itself. Still, most schools had some school-level framework or approach fostering the social and emotional development of children. The understanding of teachers at INGO and local NGO-run NFE centers of PSS programming most closely resembled that of the transnational actors in Lebanon's humanitarian and development field.

Public School Teachers Who Taught Both Lebanese and Syrian Refugee Students

I interviewed a total of three public school teachers who taught both first shift (Lebanese) and second shift (Syrian refugee) schools. All taught in the Mount Lebanon Governorate and in schools considered to be situated in largely urban and peri-urban contexts. The three teachers were all contractual teachers, who also taught second shifts for Syrian refugee students in the afternoon; therefore, they each taught at two schools. All three teachers taught at three different primary schools in the afternoon, and in the morning, each taught at a primary, secondary, and intermediate school. The perceptions of the public school teachers who taught both Lebanese and Syrian refugee students are presented in the following two subsections: (a) conceptualization of SEL and related

approaches and (b) urgent social and emotional development needs of Lebanese and refugee children.

Conceptualization of SEL and Related Approaches

SEL and PSS were not understood as composite terms or particular programming approaches by the teachers. SEL was not understood as a particular programming approach as it was by transnational–national actors, but teachers instead tried to brainstorm based on individual words—social, emotional, and learning. Still, most of them commonly stated that fostering nonacademic competencies and skills was among individual teachers' responsibilities and not systematically done in the curriculum or mandated by any kind of school-level policy or practice. One said:

> It is applied without using the SEL term, maybe in practice more. It is more than talking about it in public like in your schools where you are teaching. I think SEL is giving social support for students. Listen to them and teach them . . . appreciation and respect. And giving back to their friends and family. . . . Sometimes, I heard these terms in training sessions, and they talk about it even though it is math training. But it is more individually practiced by teachers than directed by [the] principal or ministry. (T-Public-PM3, personal communication, February 9, 2021)

Another definition or description of SEL by teachers included the following: "I heard it for the first time. I think it is about giving students a feel[ing] that they are safe, they can speak, they can say, they can express it—to have this atmosphere that they can trust us" (T-Public-PM2, personal communication, January 30, 20210); "I feel like SEL is something related to psychological support in terms of, you know, for teachers in post-disaster times. . . . We are trying to show support for the students" (T-Public-AM1, personal communication, January 26, 2021). Teachers were able to brainstorm the

meaning of the term SEL in different ways, but mostly related to the teacher–student relationship and classroom environment.

When asked about the PSS, I found no better understanding of PSS by the public school teachers who taught both Lebanese and refugee students than by those who taught only first shifts even though PSS sessions were officially institutionalized in second shift schools. Not one of them was aware of the weekly PSS sessions offered to the students, and only one knew about the psychosocial counselor in her school to whom she could refer children with behavioral issues. They did not consider providing or embracing the concept of PSS or SEL in their daily subject teaching practices. In the following subsection, I present some of the social and emotional development needs of Lebanese and refugee children at public schools found to be addressed by these teachers.

Urgent Social and Emotional Development Needs of Lebanese and Refugee Children at Public Schools

Because the SEL-PSS approach was not understood as specific projects, most public school teachers did not identify the particular problems such programs are typically designed to address. Instead, I asked the teachers about urgent social and emotional development needs of the Lebanese and refugee children. Demonstrating certain negative perceptions and biases toward Syrian refugee students and their home environment, all three teachers described the most urgent need for social and emotional development in terms of providing them with additional support for behavior and academics. All three public school teachers who taught morning shifts for Lebanese students and afternoon shifts for Syrian refugee students consistently perceived Syrian refugee students negatively.

Two of the three teachers perceived the Syrian refugee students as academically deficient and more violent than Lebanese students. One of them spoke about the violent nature of Syrian refugee students and the reason for her perceptions, relating them as a general sentiment among her colleagues teaching Syrian refugee students at her school:

> Syrian students are very violent with each other even when they are small, even below Grade 4. They show violence, and even when they play with each other, they play violently. . . . I think the issue is the problems they face at home. Parents deal with them very violently; for example, they are beaten by parents, and that is why they have this reaction against each other. (T-Public-PM3, personal communication, February 9, 2021).

This perspective demonstrated the perception teachers had of refugee students and their families and teachers' assumption that the home environment would affect their academic outcomes.

The other focused on discussing the challenges teachers had faced in teaching Syrian refugee students at her school while expressing some biases teachers had toward them:

> Challenges between Syrian refugee students and Lebanese teachers in afternoon shift schools are mainly two aspects. First, we have issues of communication. Even though they speak Arabic, and we speak Arabic, because of their accents, we don't understand their language, and they don't understand our language. The second challenge is intellectual and moral challenge. Syrian students are not serious about getting educated, but they come to school because of the money they are paid monthly if they come to school. So it is very difficult for teachers because they don't understand lessons. The relationship between Syrian students and teachers is distant because they are not engaged in studying. (T-Public-PM1, personal communication, February 2, 2021)

The teacher not only mentioned that Syrian refugee students' academic and behavioral issues urgent social and emotional development issues, but she also generalized Syrian refugee students' lack of interest in learning.

All three teachers of both Lebanese and Syrian refugee students at public schools generally perceived Syrian refugee students to be better supported financially than Lebanese students because of additional subsidies international donors provided to second shift schools. For example, one of the teachers explained her perception toward the subsidy:

> Each Syrian students are being paid monthly if they are registered in school, and this is why they come to school. Second shifts abolished enrollment fees for students, provided free textbooks for all Syrians. This has all come at a cost. Lebanese suffer a lot from the financial crisis but it is only Syrians who are paid monthly. (T-Public-PM1, Personal Communication, February 2, 2021)

Two of them specifically stated that although Syrian refugee students had multiple challenges, they did not perceive addressing the children's social and emotional development needs as their responsibility. One of the teachers of math and science in afternoon shifts spoke about her perspective on this:

> I have good relationships with Lebanese students, but it is more difficult with Syrians. They need someone to listen to them, and if I want to make a session for listening, I will not teach them a lot, so I can't listen for everyone. So I can't make relationships very friendly with them because we don't have so much time. I mean, it's not my job. I think there must be someone who listen. (T-Public-PM3, personal communications, February 9, 2021)

Similarly, other teachers also believed their relationship with Syrian refugee students was worse than that with Lebanese students. They all showed little desire to improve the relationships and instead pointed to the need for additional support staff to deal with Syrian refugee students' behavioral issues. One afternoon shift teacher of Syrian refugees reported that her school had a psychological counselor; another teacher said her school did not have one but needed one, and the third teacher was unaware of such a teaching position. Even the teacher who said the school had a counselor did not think the school

implemented weekly PSS sessions in classrooms. Instead, she understood, the school counselor focused on providing individual support for those referred to her because of some "behavioral issues or emotional issues. If a student is not cheerful or is crying alone in class, things like this" (T-Public-PM1, personal communications, February 2, 2021).

In the following section, I present two other public school teachers' conceptions of SEL, and the urgent social and emotional development needs they identified for Lebanese children.

Public School Teachers of Lebanese Students

Two public high school teachers in Mount Lebanon, who taught Lebanese students in first shift schools, were both permanent teachers with an employment status characterized by secured retirement age, pay schedules, and other benefits, considered better than that of the contractual teachers at first and second shift schools described above. The teachers, who were colleagues at the same high school, described their school as a privileged public school because of the continuous financial support it received from a private school board in the area, deemed a unique arrangement in a public school. The teachers described some exposure to training opportunities provided by international organizations (e.g., UNESCO), INGOs (e.g., World Learning, War Child Holland), and bilateral government organizations (e.g., British Council).

The first section that follows details the conceptualizations of SEL and related approaches of these teachers; the section after that presents the urgent development needs of Lebanese children.

Conceptualization of SEL and Related Approaches

The conceptualization of SEL and related approaches was similar to those of the three public school teachers of both Syrian refugees and Lebanese students in the previous section. Teachers were unfamiliar with both terms—SEL and PSS—and similarly tried to deconstruct each of the words in the terms or connected them with their previous related trainings. For example, a teacher also talked about exposure to these concepts through training but not necessarily their institutionalization or application long-term afterward. One of the teachers highlighted how one-off training does not change school culture. The training referenced mostly occurred through internationally funded projects, for example, via British Council, USAID, and War Child Holland:[31]

> There were some initiatives and trainings but again, it is limited; and it's at a personal level. It goes back to the teachers themselves. It is up to the teachers, and it's not forced, and it's not part of a general plan for it for the public sector altogether. For example, I still remember a training I received from a War Child Holland's trainer from Italy on conflict resolution in peaceful ways a number of years ago. It helped us a lot, but has it become a school policy? No, it was just a program that students and teachers worked on, and then it was over. Now we don't have sort of, you know, objectives or a vision or different transitional stage. And it's over now. (T-Public-AM1, personal communication, January 26, 2021)

Both teachers emphasized "social" aspects of SEL, likely influenced by the cultural and religious diversity extracurricular program in which their school participated with a large national NGO. They perceived the extracurricular programs effective and necessary in fostering students' emotional growth and social learning. One teacher said:

> In Lebanon, social and emotional is not given much importance. Social, a little bit in the community service. Schools who have social work. When we work with students in clubs, for example the club I led, we tell them that the major objective of this program is to accept others. Accept diversity. Diversity should be

[31]Such training opportunities by organizations or donor-supported trainers seemed to be more available only before the MEHE's NFE regulations in 2017. At the time of the interviews, public school teachers were trained only by CERD trainers and coached by DOPS coaches, trained by donor-funded master trainers.

> accepted. It should be tolerated. Students have to be tolerant…In the curriculum itself, there is no importance for emotional education or such like that. (T-Public-AM2, personal communication, January 24, 2021)

A similar positive sentiment was also evident in another teacher's statement: "The students grew in their skills about emotional growth, social support, tolerance, accepting other people" (T-Public-AM1, personal communication, January 26, 2021) through such extracurricular activities. Next, the teachers' perception of the urgent social and emotional development needs of Lebanese children attending public schools are presented.

Urgent Social and Emotional Development Needs of Lebanese Children at Public Schools

Unlike public school teachers teaching both Syrian refugees and Lebanese students, public school teachers who teach only first shifts highlighted more fundamental and systemic challenges of public education in Lebanon, prioritizing content knowledge for students. Teachers across all type of schools—public, private, and NFE centers—unanimously believed that the Lebanese school system has been unable to address the social and emotional development needs of children because of the antiquated curriculum in which academic content knowledge for standardized exams was prioritized. Teachers believed that the current curriculum emphasizing the memorization of outdated content to pass the examinations was the underlying challenge to teachers' ability to address such needs. One of the public school teachers said:

> We're studying for example, the history of 200–300 years ago. Why? What do they need it for? Actually, students need something practical to help them in their life, something to help them build up their confidence, build up their character, helping them in the practical life. . . . We need some subjects which help students know more, which increase their general knowledge, something that enriches their

> knowledge, something that widens their mind and their way of thinking. I think that they're very limited here. The curriculum limits the thinking of the students. The students' target is to get high grades by exams. (T-Public-AM2, personal communications, January 24, 2021)

All the teachers strongly believed that integrating SEL into the curriculum would be the only way to systematically implement the approach.

None of the public school teachers directly mentioned teacher-level problems at public schools, such as teacher-induced physical or verbal violence and outdated pedagogy, as problems in public schools. Private school teachers and NFE center teachers, however, had different perceptions of public schools. They likely compared conditions at private schools and NFE centers with their perceived condition of the public schools as nonchild-friendly and believed that an SEL approach could be helpful in improving the environment at public schools:

> I will tell you about public schools. I personally saw a teacher that starts cursing him, cursing his mom, and then the hitting him with a ruler. I feel bad when students are badly treated. In the public school, young people are maltreated. They don't treat them well just because they are not patient. . . . Public school teachers are not ready to teach them. (T-Prviate1, January 15, 2021)

Such negative impressions of public school teachers were not unusual, and in the next section, the perspectives of public school teachers are juxtaposed against those of private school teachers.

Private School Teachers

Four private intermediate and high school teachers from four schools were interviewed for this research; they taught only Lebanese students. Teachers working at two schools located in Beirut and the Mount Lebanon Governorate, adjacent to Beirut, described their schools as well-resourced, top-notch schools. In addition to the early

childhood through Grade 12 education offered at both schools, one of them provided four different programs (Lebanese Baccalaureate, French Baccalaureate, International Baccalaureate, and American College Preparatory programs); the other provided two programs (Lebanese Baccalaureate and International Baccalaureate). The teacher participant from the first school (T-Private3) had taught English for four years in the intermediate (Grades 7–9) section of the school. The teacher participant from the second school (T-Private4) was the head of the intermediary school (Grades 7–9), where she had taught English for the past 34 years and where she still taught English one hour a day. Although each school provided some needs-based scholarships to a small number of socioeconomically disadvantaged students, the student bodies of both schools were mainly from higher socioeconomic strata.

Two other private schools located in the second-largest city in Lebanon, Tripoli in the North Governorate, were also well-established in the region but with seemingly less direct influence from their Western affiliations. Teacher participants from both schools were focal teachers in a large national NGO's extracurricular education program promoting cultural and religious diversity. One of the schools was a Greek Orthodox High School (Grades 10–12), a well-known school with a historically strong reputation. The school offered the Lebanese Baccalaureate program only. According to the teacher participant (T-Private1), the school had ranked first in its pass rates in the North Governorate on the official exams, Brevet and Baccalaureate. She had taught English as her main subject for the past 22 years, the first four at a public school; she also taught cultural studies. The other school, a private Christian high school (Grades 10–12), offered an American college preparatory program and the Lebanese Baccalaureate program.

When asked about the student body, the teacher emphasized her school's reputation for its intentional focus on diversity in religious background and socioeconomic background.

Another teacher participant (T-Private2) had mainly taught computer science for the past 21 years, but she also taught leadership and economics at the time of the interview. Both private school teacher participants (T-Private1 and T-Private2) from the Tripoli area identified the majority of their students as upper-middle class. I first describe the conceptualizations of SEL held by the four private school teachers and its related approaches and then explain urgent social and emotional development needs they identified for Lebanese children.

Conceptualization of SEL and Related Approaches

Of the four private schools, the two in Beirut and Mount Lebanon practiced systematic, school-wide approaches to children's social and emotional development or well-being; the other two private schools in the Tripoli area had less systematic approaches to the topic. Teachers working at two schools located in Beirut and the Mount Lebanon Governorate shared the perspective that each school had its own policy and strategy to support children's social and emotional development specific to its international affiliations or networks. Each school financed all relevant approaches and programs; thus, the teachers did not perceive the influence of international humanitarian actors, including donors, as significant in introducing terminology and approaches fostering social and emotional development. Although neither of the teacher participants heard of the term SEL in particular, both associated it with well-being.

A common approach both schools implemented was weekly advisory sessions, an hour both schools dedicated to discussing students' nonacademic, social, and emotional

needs. One of the schools used a specific curriculum for the advisory sessions—the Jigsaw Puzzle from the U.K. The teacher at the other school in Beirut (T-Private3) received weekly emails from the dean of the intermediary school with topics and teaching resources for sessions that she facilitated. Topics discussed during the sessions were those relevant for adolescents, including substances, dangers of smoking, hygiene and health, netiquette, and cyberbullying. One of the teachers further described how the weekly sessions were implemented in her school:

> An advisory session is once a week. Each teacher is assigned an advisory class. In this advisory class we do not teach academic curriculum material. It depends on every week, but we do tackle those topics in this class, which focuses on students' social and emotional needs. As soon as you bring up this concept of, for example, text anxiety—the students love this topic—they started talking [about] how much that attention in self-help, just talking to their teacher, . . . someone they feel comfortable with [giving] advice on how to tackle it [helps them]. (T-Private3, personal communications, January 18, 2021)

Both teachers described the sessions helped students relieving the stress from academic pressure.

Besides the advisory sessions, each school undertook school-wide approaches in addressing children's social and emotional needs. The private school in Beirut seemed to foster social and emotional competencies of children by creating positive classroom and school climate as well as integrating academic subjects founded on American or European teaching and learning theories (e.g., Danielson Framework of Learning). Not only did the school focus on implementing child-centered pedagogy, but the school also recently asked teachers to integrate Approaches to Learning, adopted from the International Baccalaureate program, into their daily lesson plans across all subjects. T-Private3 explained how she integrated the framework into her English lesson planning:

"The framework has different categories, like communication, social, self-management, research, and thinking. Under each category, there are effective skills to focus and concentrate [on], such as critical thinking, creative thinking. We must incorporate these skills into every single lesson" (personal communications, January 18, 2021).

The British Christian private school located in Mount Lebanon took a somewhat different approach. The school considered the "emotional and physical well-being of children" a paramount issue to be addressed at multiple levels. An explicit and systematic focus on well-being was spearheaded by a British principal. The school had two vice principals, one who supervised only "academic curriculum and books" and the other vice principal who "focus[ed] on emotional and physical well-being of children" (T-Private4, personal communication, March 11, 2011). The teacher–administrator (T-Private4) spoke about her school's holistic and systematic approach to well-being to address any nonacademic needs of children:

> Before the school stopped [because of the COVID-19], our school's health committee looked at the cafeteria food to make sure it's all healthy, and we were taking out things that should not be sold to kids. Security, safety issues on campus were being studied…The safety committee look into students that have specific medications or health problems. Our school's reputation on caring and that no one is bullied at school has grown because we take it very seriously. If I get a bullying message at my desk that someone is crying because they were bullied, I drop everything I was doing and I go deal with the issue. We have a formal policy towards bullying. (T-Private4, personal communication, March 11, 2021)

The teacher proudly emphasized the school-wide efforts to focus on well-being.

Two other private schools located in Tripoli were also well-established in the region but with seemingly less direct influence from their Western affiliations. Teacher participants described aspects of the schools, providing opportunities for students to develop social and emotional competencies; however, the approaches taken at these

schools were not as explicit as those at the two private schools introduced earlier and without any structured curricula. In one of the schools, a teacher described an example of having a "school-wide project on a yearly theme that the students work on to learn about one of the values and competencies" (T-Private1, personal communications, January 15, 2021). She further explained how the project was implemented:

> In our school, it is decided each year, I want to call it value, that we make students work for it. Each year we take a big title and let the whole school, from Grade 2 till Grade 12, to work on that topic. . . . One time, we worked on the elderly, the old people. We learned about the elderly, how to respect them, how to help them, how to support them. . . . Another year, we worked on environment, and everyone tried to be eco-friendly a little bit. (T-Private1, personal communication, January 15, 2021)

A teacher participant from another school in Tripoli conceptualized the way her school promoted social and emotional competencies of children through a diverse pool of extracurricular activities. She provided further details on how the program was implemented as a multiyear approach and fostered social skills:

> My school has a lot of programs that work on the social and emotional, other than academically. What [makes] our school . . . special is that there are clubs. I am the Activity Coordinator of my school, and we are open for any kind of clubs that are valuable for our kids, for example, the religious and cultural diversity club I was trained on by the NGO. It is about accepting others, regardless of their color, religion, their opinion, their political parties. And the first year, we have sessions to work on with students in order to explain these main points, and in Year 2, we have to do a community service each year. (T-Private2, personal communication, January 8, 2021)

Similar to the other two teachers in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, the private school teachers had not heard of the term SEL, but they both provided their own definitions and understanding of it. T-Private2 connected her own understanding of SEL to specific

activities. Emphasizing the embedded nature of such competencies throughout school subjects and extracurricular activities, she said:

> We don't call it social and emotional, but it's included in all kind[s] of courses or even in the activities that we do. So, for example, we have the drama—the drama course—which is included during the English hour. It's a way for the kids to talk and think about that emotion. So we don't have the word, but we have the action. (T-Private2, personal communication, January 15, 2021)

Another teacher participant in Tripoli perceived SEL as follows: "Children should be provided with love and care as emotional support and the opportunities to learn with a group as social" (T-Private1, personal communication, January 15, 2021). For all the private schools, because they had designated psychological counselors, the counselors' role of providing specialized psychological support for a small group of students was differentiated from the teachers' role of focusing on the social and emotional well-being of students in general. For example, a teacher participant said that they "let students know and refer some of the students if they need further advice and [have] a book session dedicated a good hour for therapy with a psychosocial counselor" (T-Private3, personal communication, January 18, 2021). All four private schools had school-based psychosocial counselors who provided focused sessions for those students who had special needs. In the next subsection, urgent social and emotional development needs identified by the private school teachers are discussed.

Urgent Social and Emotional Development Needs of Lebanese Children at Private Schools

Private school teachers identified the current problems of the Lebanese education system, focusing on academic content only and stressors associated with student assessment, particularly Brevet (Grade 9) and Baccalaureate (Grade 12). Private school

teachers likely understood SEL in terms of whole-child approaches and therefore viewed the aim of SEL as providing students opportunities to foster some nonacademic skills through various extracurricular activities and to reduce the stress of academic expectations. One stated:

> The advisory classes are aim[ed] to reduce the type of stress that students may be feeling emotionally. With the community service clubs, we would be working with the students at a public school to paint their school. It enables bonding with different social classes. It enables empathy. Psychologically, you're destressing from the academic work. (T-Private3, personal communication, January 18, 2021)

Such a perspective, though, was considered as an add-on to the existing curriculum but not necessarily integrated fully in academic curricula.

Another private school teacher also described the reason for a school-wide focus on students' well-being as a major aim. She identified the anxiety students experienced because of academic pressure as a main challenge and the school's well-being approach intended to tackle it, contrasting with other private and public schools' predominant focus on academic teaching only:

> [The] priority of schools is to have a good reputation, especially in Brevet and Baccalaureate, but how will students get if they are scared, and they are petrified? They are suffering from anxiety, but schools don't care about this. They make them memorize, and they make them work. And they are tough with them, and they are mean and cruel because in the end, it is all numbers. With our approach, we focus on the emotional, physical well-being of children. (T-Private4, Teacher, Personal Communication, March 11, 2021)

The emphasis on students' academic pressure was probably more prominent because all the private school teachers worked at high schools. Next, I present the analysis of the data derived from interviews with teachers at NFE centers run by NGOs.

Teachers at NFE Centers Run by NGOs

Teachers at NFE centers were the only group of teachers who were exposed to and familiar with PSS programs run by transnational–national humanitarian actors. Of the six teachers of Syrian refugee children at an NFE center, five worked for the same INGO; the other teacher worked for a local NGO and had exposure to a global network as a Teach for Lebanon fellow. One of the teachers had worked for another INGO; therefore, she was able to compare her various experiences. All six teachers said that they had received enough preservice training on the SEL–PSS activities that they taught. They also received regular in-service training on other related topics, including "how to deal with parents in online settings, especially during COVID-19, [and] how to support [the] parenting and emotional well-being of children as well as teacher well-being" by respective INGOs (T-NFE3, personal communication, February 19, 2021).

In the following subsections I first review the six teachers' conceptualizations of SEL–PSS. I then address the teachers' perceptions of the urgent social and emotional development needs of Syrian refugee children.

Conceptualization of SEL and Related Approaches

All teachers at NFE centers were familiar with the term PSS. Both INGO and local NGO teachers perceived PSS as a "set of activities" that they deliver to students. Most teachers were unfamiliar with the term SEL, but many assumed it to be the same as PSS. One of the NFE center teachers described her understanding of PSS and SEL:

> PSS is a set of activities that we do for the kids and their goal is to improve their mental health, improves their integration to society, and also teaches them valuable lessons. It also builds their skills socially, physically, emotionally, and psychologically. And through PSS the kids are able to express themselves and grow their self-confidence. They build healthy relationships with their environment, and they feel comfortable in these relationships, which lessen the pressures that they face in their specific environment and society. . . . PSS and SEL are very similar. With support, we try to support them psychologically, and

> strengthen them emotionally, not letting them become too sensitive. (T-NFE4, personal communication, February 16, 2021)

For both organizations, teachers recalled that the PSS manuals they followed was flexible and not based on a specific framework; however, teachers had varying understandings of whether a specific curriculum or manual was to be followed to implement PSS activities. All five teachers working for an INGO's NFE center said they followed PSS activities provided by the center. Each week they met and discussed their lesson plans, including PSS activities with fellow grade-level teachers and their supervisor. Some said that the PSS activities were included as a part of the MEHE-certified early childhood education (ECE) curriculum. For example, a teacher said, "Inside the ECE curriculum, there are 10 to 15 pages at the end of PSS activities" (T-NFE4, personal communication, February 16, 2021). Another teacher did not know whether a set of structured curriculum or manual on PSS was available and said, "Maybe my supervisor uses a specific curriculum. What I get are worksheets of PSS activities once a week. I know that there are specialists in charge of PSS and SEL" (T-NFE6, personal communication, February 17, 2021).

A teacher at the local NGO's NFE center had received PSS-SEL training from two different organizations, one from a large Lebanese NGO and one from Teach for Lebanon. She stated that the first training used materials from UNICEF's PSS manual, and the second training she received involved a framework and resources created by Big Bad Boo Studios to accompany *1001 Nights,* an animated series[32]. She was not asked to

[32] Big Bad Boo Studios is headquartered in Canada with offices in New York and Los Angeles. An animated version of the famed 1001 Arabian Nights, *1001 Nights* airs in over 80 countries in 15 languages.

follow a specific curriculum but to base her instruction on the training she had received; and she continued to integrate the PSS approach into her lessons. The teacher said, "PSS training is completed, and we don't get constant training anymore, but I try my best to integrate such topics in my computer lessons. For example, I ask them to write about PSS topics like child rights" (T-NFE1, personal communication, March 26, 2021).

All six NFE center teachers said that they had initially learned the terminology and what PSS was for in their respective INGO trainings. They all generally believed INGOs were the key actors promoting such an approach; all the teachers were positive about this. For example, one of the teachers said, "PSS is popular when it comes to NGOs in nonformal centers but not in public schools because they don't have many programs like that" (T-NFE5, personal communication, February 12, 2021). Another teacher said, "In traditional schools, no, and I wish [they] had like psychosocial support when I was a kid. Mainly NGOs are focusing on this. Some NGOs also implement PSS projects in schools" (T-NFE1, personal communication, March 26, 2021). The next subsection covers the teachers' description on urgent social and emotional development needs of Syrian refugee children attending NFE centers.

Urgent Social and Emotional Development Needs of Syrian Refugee Children at NFE Centers

Teachers at NFE centers most frequently mentioned Syrian refugee students' dire living conditions at tented settlements and the poverty that negatively affected their social and emotional developments. Some teachers stated that Syrian refugee families were more likely to inflict violence upon their children, therefore, affecting negative behaviors. Unlike public school teachers, who were prejudiced and biased against Syrian refugee

students, NFE center teachers who taught Syrian students only were less likely to exhibit prejudice against Syrian refugee students. For example, one of the teachers shared her perspective that Syrians were generally worse off than vulnerable Lebanese. She said:

> Syrian refugee families are more vulnerable than Lebanese. At least poor Lebanese families live in house[s], but my Syrian refugee students' families live in tents. Of course, the living condition affects the social and emotional development of children. Also, refugee parents are always occupied with meeting basic needs. Some of them go to Beirut to make some money. (T-NFE2, personal communication, February 13, 2021)

The NFE centers served a majority of Syrian refugee students living in informal tented settlements, in which their families have likely stayed for years. Teachers were also engaged in parenting sessions with their students' families and were more likely to be aware of their living conditions.

When speaking about issues the PSS activities aim to address, teachers at NFE centers for Syrian refugee students were likely to mention issues specific to Syrian refugee students, especially related to mental health, trauma, and their behavior. Some teachers elaborated further that some of the behavioral issues did not derive from the war or displacement itself because many of them had been born in Lebanon; the issues were instead the result of the daily stressors Syrian refugee children faced. Examples of these mentioned by the NFE teachers included the inability of families to meet their basic needs and the existence of domestic violence and abuse by stressed parents. One of the teachers described the problems her center's PSS program was intended to address and what the objective of the program was:

> Problems coming from [a] difficult environment, a war zone, and from nothing. The kids have come from a very difficult environment. They come from disasters. These issues we see specifically with these children not with other kids. They are

> afraid and timid. These circumstances have really affected those children negatively. (T-NFE4, personal communication, February 16, 2021)

A few more teachers also shared the perspective that Syrian refugee children were shy and timid at NFE centers. Teachers believed that the PSS sessions they implemented at the NFE center "lessen[ed the children's] trauma and timidness [and allowed them to] pour out negative energy, anger, and violent urges they feel" (T-NFE4, Personal Communication, February 16, 2021). Most of the NFE teachers believed that a PSS program would be more useful for Syrian refugee students than their Lebanese peers because teachers perceived the former as generally receiving less social and emotional support at home than the latter. They explained that Syrian refugee students usually came from difficult socioeconomic conditions and lived in dire living conditions in Lebanon; therefore, they were likely exposed to more violence and abuse from their parents. The following subsection summarizes the horizontal–transversal comparison.

Summary of the Horizontal–Transversal Comparison

The horizontal–transversal comparison across teachers at four types of schools demonstrated the complex and diverse educational problems teachers faced depending on the material conditions of schools and their affiliations with international networks. Teachers at public schools, which are usually considered the least desired schooling options in Lebanon, had the least systemic support. Teachers of both Syrian refugee students and Lebanese students clearly demonstrated biases toward the former: that their behaviors were undesirable, that they were not academically engaged, and that they had no desire to give them further support. Well-resourced private schools offered systematic, school-wide support for the social and emotional well-being of students, but those with

greater systematic support often had strong American or British affiliations. Private school teachers were concerned about outdated curricula and national examinations exerting too much academic pressure on students, negatively affecting their social and emotional well-being. NFE center teachers had been trained by INGOs and national NGOs on PSS approaches and, therefore, perceived them as set of activities in which to engage students. NFE teachers saw how the dire living conditions and poverty of Syrian refugee families affected children's social and emotional development, including their sometimes negative behaviors at centers. A summary of Chapter 5 appears in the following section.

Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter I addressed my second research question: *How are discourses on SEL similar or different at the global, national, and local levels; and how have they evolved over time?* For the first part of the question, I focused on how the conceptualization of SEL was consistent or not consistent across actors. For the second part of the question, I focused on comparing the problems that SEL was intended to address and the program objectives.

The analysis revealed a mismatch between the technification of SEL–PSS as a global solution and the locally specific educational problems it was intended to address. In the vertical comparison at the global level, I found that organizations conceptualized and defined SEL and related terms narrowly as teachable and measurable individual skills and competencies and as depoliticized education programming approaches in the global policy texts. Transnational–national actors introduced SEL and PSS as a global solution in addressing problems facing crisis-affected children and youth in Lebanon. Particularly,

PSS was introduced to address the issue of psychosocial distress and truama specific to Syrian refugees, which later evolved to address the issue of daily stressors for the same population; and SEL was introduced to holistically address the low quality of teaching and learning in public schools. National policy-makers strategically adopted the terms "SEL" and "PSS" to work with multiple donors, but actively recontextualized the contents to fit their own needs and priorities. Thus, SEL and PSS were no longer defined and differentiated as used by transnational–national actors to address low quality teaching and learning and psychosocial distress, respectively; instead both served as a means to reduce violence in schools within the frame of Child Protection Poilcy in School. At the level of national–local actors, for most of the key informants, the term "SEL" did not exist; the PSS approach was familiar to those engaged with internationally funded programs. This also indicates that SEL–PSS discourses largely remained at the global and national levels and, therefore, relegated local actors to the background.

The mismatch between the narrowed, technical understanding of SEL–PSS at the global level and the application of SEL–PSS at the local level was even more evident when examining the horizontal–transversal comparison across teachers. Analysis further demonstrated the complex and diverse educational problems teachers faced at the local level, depending on the material conditions at their schools, where they were located, and their international affiliations. These diverse, socially, and locally specific education problems indicated that a simplified, depoliticized SEL as a global solution would likely exclude many other challenges if implemented in schools.

Chapter 6. Policy-in-Transformation: Multiscalar SEL–PSS Policy-Making by Actors and Discourses

In this dissertation I examined the complex processes and underlying mechanisms of national SEL policy-making processes in Lebanon, building on the Cultural Political Economy analytical frameworks (Jessop, 2010; Sum & Jessop, 2013) and key theoretical concepts from critical policy studies. By applying the CCS methodology (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017), I "followed" SEL as a policy discourse and as an idea as it traveled across global, national, and local scales to understand how the SEL policies and programs in Lebanon were socially, politically, and discursively constructed since the Syrian refugee influx in 2011.

In Chapter 4, I presented an actor-focused analysis of the process by which SEL and PSS had become national policies in Lebanon, influenced by multiple political, economic, social, and cultural drivers there and globally. My findings showed that the national SEL–PSS policy-making process was a seemingly collaborative one, initiated by transnational–national actors who had power to set the agenda; but national policy-makers strategically recontextualized it to align with national political, economic, and cultural priorities. From the perspectives and experiences of national–local actors, however, implementation at the school level would be problematic because of the endemic mistrust of the Lebanese government among teachers. In Chapter 5, I compared various actors' fragmented understanding and discourses on SEL–PSS. My analysis revealed that SEL and PSS were introduced by transnational–national actors as global solutions. SEL was introduced in Lebanon only recently but appeared to become increasingly popular because the terminology was associated with a long-term

development approach at the systems level for all vulnerable students in Lebanon, and PSS was more associated with humanitarian approaches for Syrian refugee students. At the local level, teachers articulated more diverse understandings and approaches to Lebanese and Syrian refugee students' social and emotional development needs, which were vastly different based on the material conditions of the schools. In this chapter, I synthesize the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5, revisit the theoretical foundations and conceptual framework to discuss relevance and limitations of the frameworks, and draw implications for future research and practice on SEL and more broadly global education policy and programs mobilized in settings particularly in the Global South.

In the synthesis section, I relate the key concepts found in the SEL–PSS policy formation processes in Lebanon to relevant literature by reviewing key steps of the policy-making processes. To connect the findings presented in the two chapters more organically, I apply Sum and Jessop's (2013) CPE analytical framework of four selectivities—structural selectivity, discursive selectivity, agential selectivity, and technological selectivity[33]—to elaborate how SEL became a privileged policy solution in Lebanon. I discuss (a) power and inequality across policy actors from perspectives of global governance and (b) the agency of national policy-makers and national–local actors from the perspective of policy mobilities theory as two complementary theoretical concepts to the CPE analytical framework. After that, I describe how humanitarian,

[33] Structural selectivity is a contested reproduction and privileging of some actors, political, social, and economic institutional power. Discursive selectivity involves both discursive and extradiscursive moments of social processes that frame individual subjects' lived experiences and reduce complex social realities. Technological selectivity mobilizes technical apparatuses to advance power–knowledge and object–subject formation. Agential selectivity refers to the differential capacity of agents to engage in strategic calculation and repoliticization (Sum & Jessop, 2013).

development, security, and resilience discourses were used in constructing issues for SEL–PSS to address and the solutions to address the problems. At the end of the section, I propose a revised conceptual framework for the research. Based on the findings and discussions, I draw six implications for the future research, policy, and practice on SEL and similarly traveling global education program models in the Global South. The six implications are for (a) SEL and related education research in EiE, (b) SEL practice in the Global South, (c) critical education policy studies, (d) global governance of humanitarian and development aid, (e) global education policy research methodology, and (f) research and practice in the Global South during the pandemic. A brief conclusion follows to reiterate the main findings of this dissertation research.

Synthesis: Multiscalar SEL–PSS Policy-Making Processes in Lebanon

The critical theory-informed CPE analytical framework allows the interrogation of the SEL–PSS policy-making processes as an effect of the four selectivities in understanding how actors at multiple scales reduced complex problems and social realities and perceived SEL as a solution to resolve the problems in Lebanon. CPE analytical framework and critical policy studies in general point to the importance of the political, economic, social, and cultural contexts in which policy is formulated and created. Using these analytical frameworks, I highlight both the structural and discursive conditions that enabled the policy-making and the key roles policy actors played in transferring policies at multiple scales. To highlight the dynamic interactions and relations among policy actors across scales, the synthesis purposefully focuses on various policy actors with the discursive factors. In particular, attention is given to how the policy actors produced, renegotiated, and were restricted by SEL–PSS discourses through the

policy-making processes. The first four subsections focus on the discussion of the key concepts that appeared in each of the policy-making processes: (a) setting SEL–PSS as a global policy solution: INEE and global governance of EiE, (b) framing strategies of SEL: alignment with dominant ideologies and paradigms, (c) mobilizing the SEL–PSS policy: transnational policy network, and (d) politics of formulating SEL–PSS policies: recontextualization. The fifth subsection focuses on how the national SEL–PSS policy-making processes have relegated local actors to the background.

Setting SEL–PSS as a Global Policy Solution: INEE and Global Governance of EiE

My findings show that the INEE and its selected member organizations in the PSS–SEL subgroup played a significant role in deterritorializing SEL and PSS as global discourse and practice, constructing the global "objects of policy transfer" (Peck & Theodore, 2015, p. 27). INEE and its member organizations had spread the global norm of holistic learning in crisis-affected contexts individually and collectively, constructing SEL–PSS as a global solution to achieve the goal of holistic learning. In the process of adopting SEL–PSS as a policy priority in the EiE field, the committed technical specialists of a few INEE member agencies were able to use the status of the INEE as a globally governing network of the EiE field. The practitioner-led knowledge and experience of SEL–PSS became legitimized by disseminating technical papers on the topic, which also influenced formalizing the idea of SEL–PSS policy in global and national policy texts. Further details and synthesis of the global SEL–PSS discourse construction and the role of INEE and its PSS–SEL subgroup member agencies are described below.

INEE as a transnational policy network and its selected member organizations played a significant role in circulating SEL–PSS discourses and setting the theme in global agenda, "influencing in the way global issues are governed" (Chaqués-Bonafont, 2019, p. 453; see also Macpherson, 2016). Under the umbrella of INEE, the SEL–PSS agenda was elevated as an interagency issue of EiE through structural selectivity by creating the new PSS–SEL subgroup, and at the same time the new structure allowed and legitimized certain INGOs to hold power over the SEL–PSS agenda and global discourses through agential selectivity. According to the INEE website, the PSS–SEL collaborative, a successor to the PSS–SEL subgroup,[34] included 18 member agencies all of which but one were large INGOs, a bilateral donor, UN agencies, and academics headquartered in the Global North. The PSS-SEL subgroup was co-convened by IRC and Save the Children and has actively led key global-level SEL–PSS discourses.

The unique, multilayered, and complex but flexible governing structure of INEE with its clear focus on professionalization, knowledge production, and policy influence had been identified as the network's success as an EiE discourse creator (Lopes Cardozo & Novelli, 2018; Macpherson, 2016). As previous research indicated, while INEE's nearly 18,000 members across the world (as of December 2020) represent a diverse group of INGOs, national NGOs, UN agencies, bilateral organizations both in the Global North and the Global South, governing structures within INEE, particularly steering group and working group members who often decide on thematic focus, were mostly already powerful actors in the Global North (INEE, 2021; Lopes Cardozo & Novelli, 2018).

[34] According to the INEE website, the PSS-SEL collaborative "builds on the momentum and achievements of the previous group, with the same aim to better support ongoing work in PSS and SEL in crisis contexts."

Thus, my findings indicate the unique dual role of INEE as a strategic selective structure and a strategic actor in EiE (Lopes Cardozo & Novelli 2018, p. 246).

Once formalized as a subgroup, INEE-endorsed knowledge products, including a guidance document and tools on SEL–PSS were deliberately disseminated and recognized as an "international reference frame," an effect of technological selectivity (Steiner-Khamsi, 2012, p. 9). Two major outcomes of the PSS-SEL subgroup—an INEE Background Paper entitled *Psychosocial Support and Social and Emotional Learning for Children and Youth in Emergency Settings* (2016) and the *INEE Guidance Note on PSS* (2018)—demonstrated the power of INEE and its influence on high-level donor policies across the globe as well as its programming priorities at the field level as described in Chapters 4 and 5. For example, the global policy texts, including EU (2019), UNHCR (2019), and ECW (2021), all included citations of INEE publications in definitions of SEL–PSS terminology. Findings also suggest that the two INEE publications were referred to as the EiE field-agreed standard and definition of SEL–PSS by the transnational–national actors working in Lebanon in practice. The evidence aligned with previous critical policy studies, which stated that mechanisms of influence of transnational policy actors have increasingly become more multilateral than bilateral by articulating, standardizing, disseminating new norms and principles (Dale, 1999; Finnemore & Barnett, 2004; Steiner-Khamsi, 2010; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018).

Particularly, INEE's PSS–SEL subgroup and its subsequent publications played key roles in deterritorializing the United States-originated SEL and helping it gain global status. Unlike other long-term development contexts in which policies became a global

model after a number of countries borrowed a policy, the process of adopting SEL in a national space was accelerated through the unique positioning of INEE as global interagency network in education in crisis settings (Steiner-Khamsi, 2010; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018). According to INEE (2016), SEL falls under the PSS umbrella in crisis-affected settings with more intentional linkages to academics, planned learning, and whole-child skills building. Both INEE publications adopted the definition, key competencies, and evidence of SEL from the United States-based research collaborative CASEL. Considering the perceived nature of INEE's guidance and tools as a globally agreed-upon EiE sector and standard, the influence of INEE, particularly the PSS-SEL subgroup, in trading SEL as a global model was substantial (Steiner-Khamsi, 2010).

I reported some terminology debates on SEL, PSS, and related approaches; but regardless of the specific terminology donors and humanitarian organizations use, INEE's PSS–SEL subgroup and its member agencies collectively played key roles in setting the global policy agenda for holistic learning in supporting countries in crisis-affected contexts. As explained in Chapter 5, current policy texts across multiple organizations pointed in the direction of supporting crisis-affected children and youth holistically beyond academic learning. INEE and its PSS–SEL subgroup member agencies were able to increase the momentum, crystalizing SEL–PSS programming and its approach from the educationalist perspective.

SEL was a particularly attractive global model for more education-driven agencies as opposed to PSS, especially those based in the United States, because of its connection to learning goals and clearly defined competencies. The United States-based

PSS–SEL subgroup member organizations championing SEL were perceived as influential in codifying SEL as one of the key learning outcomes in USAID (2018) education policy. This finding is aligned with the significance of "the circulation of legitimized forms of practice-knowledge" and "new forms of networking among middle managers" or "experts" in formulating transnational policies (Barnett, 2013; Peck & Theodore, 2010, p. 172; see also Larner & Laurie, 2010). Acknowledging the more recent INEE's initiatives on decolonizing EiE and anti-racism work is worthwhile because of the INEE secretariat's official statement on anti-racism and racial equity in October 2020 (INEE, 2020). In the statement, INEE secretariat admitted the INEE's implicit "reinforcement and perpetuation of white supremacy culture and institutional racism through its structures and actions" and committed to strengthen and diversify its membership by initially setting up a task team on decolonizing EiE (INEE, 2020). Although more time is needed to assess the outcomes of the initiatives, they are certainly promising endeavors to examine further.

Framing Strategies of SEL: Alignment With Dominant Ideologies and Paradigms

In the previous section, my findings suggest the crucial role of INEE and its member organizations in the production of discourses on SEL–PSS globally. This section focuses on identifying how the rise of SEL as a global policy solution can be understood as an effect of structural and discursive selectivity based on its ideological alignment with evolving development paradigms and policy approaches in the EiE field (Peck & Theodore, 2010, pp. 170, 172). In other words, SEL became an attractive global model because the educational problems it was intended to address, and its objectives were aligned with mainstream development and EiE discourses and approaches. Below, I

highlight three points from the examination of the *context of context* to explain how the rise of SEL aligned with neoliberal principles and ideologies (Dale, 2018).

First, the framing of SEL as a promising policy solution across multiple policy actors fell within neoliberal social imagineries promoting individualized investment as human capital and preparedness of individuals into skills necessary for knowledge economy, which is an effect of structural selectivity. SEL is ideologically aligned with two major development paradigms or camps in the era of globally oriented SDGs: human capital theory advocates guided by the World Bank Group and human rights-based approach advocates led by UNESCO and UNICEF (Klees & Qargha, 2014; Mundy et al., 2016). Human capital theorists use efficiency-driven capitalist economy imaginaries, and human rights advocates frame education as fundamental human rights, norms, and discourses that can be considered an effect of discurisve selectivity (Mundy et al., 2016).

The definition of quality education has expanded considerably with SDGs with the increased focus on "learning" by both camps. My findings from the critical qualitative content analysis of the global policy texts show that (a) the learning crisis in stable and low-income contexts and (b) psychological distress as a barrier to learning in crisis-affected contexts were identified as major problems in achieving quality education across different organizations, including the World Bank, FCDO, USAID, UNICEF, ECW, and UNHCR. For human capital theorists, social and emotional skills were conceptualized as skills necessary to succeed academically and in the context of lifelong learning (Mundy et al., 2016). For example, USAID emphasized that social and emotional skills may "boost the growth of academic outcomes, such as literacy and numeracy skills" (USAID, 2019, p. 4). Furthermore, the World Bank described social and emotional skills as

"strongly affect[ing] employment status, work experience, occupational choices, and wages" (World Bank, 2018, p. 96). Under the umbrella of the skills discourse that human capital theorists have asserted, which includes high-order cognitive skills like problem-solving skills and adaptive learning, SEL is now considered part of the valuable skills and competencies that individuals must acquire in order to yield significant individual and social returns (Bonal, 2016; Klees, 2016; Robertson, 2005, 2014; Tikly, 2020).

SEL and related skills also ideologically align with those that are more based on human rights-based approaches like UNICEF's, in which learning is understood within a broader process of teaching and learning beyond learning outcomes (Tikly, 2020). From this perspective, transversal skills are viewed as important to promote knowledge and behaviors, including global citizenship, human rights, and sustainable development in addition to academic outcomes (Tikly, 2020). This aligned with my findings in Chapter 5 in that UNICEF (2019b) framed transferable skills more with the "human rights-based vision of quality learning" (p. 9). Although UNICEF (2019b) still described the important role of transferable skills in supporting a changing workforce, the agency also equally emphasized its roles in (a) supporting lifelong learning, personal empowerment, and community engagement; (b) coping with trauma and building resilience; and also, importantly (c) transforming curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment more comprehensively than other more human capital theory-oriented organizations, in which SEL was framed mostly as an individual learning outcomes and aligned with structural selectivity. UNICEF's conception of transferable skills contributes to the imagined "globalized whole child" which emphasizes children's agency and the empowered individual (Schaub et al., 2017).

Second, findings also show that the expansion of SEL arrived hand in hand with a heightened interest in the measurement of learning outcomes with psychological, economic expertise with statistical knowledge (Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018; Williamson, 2019). Interest in and focus on the measurement of SEL skills are shown in my findings in Chapters 4 and 5. For example, across most of the policy-documents analyzed, the measurement of SEL skills was one of the key themes to address the learning crisis (ECW, 2021; USAID 2019; World Bank, 2018). An SEL mapping study conducted in the context of EiE in the Global South and led by the Harvard EASEL Lab also showed a strong interest in and focus on the measurement of SEL skills (S. M. Jones et al., 2020). World Bank (2018) framed the importance of the measurement of learning as a priority to make the learning problem visible. SEL, largely originating in the discipline of psychology, is methodologically well aligned with and satisfies mainstream needs on measurable, scientific data. ECW, an organization using MHPSS as a representative term described the ECW-funded "MHPSS progress [as] measured by [the] development of socio-emotional skills and behavior change as opposed to simply counting [the] number of children or teacher[s] reached" (ECW, 2021, p. 4). Beyond the measurement-related framing, the benefits of SEL were often described in economic terms in such organizations.

Third, SEL is also ideologically aligned with policy and programming approaches in the EiE field, both the resilience and security-oriented approaches as well as the development and human rights-based approaches discussed above (Mundy & Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Novelli, 2013). The security-oriented approach focuses on state-building and peacebuilding in states with fragility but is often framed by Western states' national

security interests (Kirk, 2011; Novelli, 2013; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013). In this approach, SEL has also become increasingly attractive to those applying a security rationale in providing education in crisis-affected contexts because of the assumed contribution of SEL to protecting at-risk youth by transforming their behaviors and attitudes. For example, in advocating the need to provide education for Syrian refugee children, the No Lost Generation Initiative report (2014) stated, "Reducing the potential for replicating the hatred and violence they had experienced required an equal investment in repairing the less visible damage to children's minds" (p. 2). This especially seems to be the case particularly in the Global South (Higgins & Novelli, 2020; Lischer, 2007; Lopes Cardozo & Novelli, 2018; Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008).

As crisis contexts have become increasingly protracted and fragile, policy approaches in EiE have overlapped significantly. In this overlapping space, "resiliency humanitarianism" gained attention (Ilcan & Rygiel, 2015). SEL fits into the longer-term, the resilience humanitarian approach paradigm, in which humanitarian interventions are perceived to enhance the overall well-being of the affected population. The resilience approach conceptualizes and accommodates the understanding that "people, communities, [and] societies have the capacity to adapt to or spring back from tragic life events" (Hilhorst, 2018, p. 5). My critical qualitative content analysis findings show increased attention to and interest in the terms representing the resilience approach, including empowerment, sustainability, and self-reliance, in the policy texts. For example, EU (2019) described the role of education in violence and conflict: "Education can also support personal, community, and societal resilience and positive social transformation that reduces the risk of further conflict" (p. 22). This shift in thinking was

also prominent in the refugee education space, where refugees' improved resilience and self-reliance were envisioned through education (UNHCR, 2019). Based on the understanding of how SEL emerged as an "object of emulation" congruent with the dominant development and humanitarian aid paradigm, the next section focuses on how policy actors at multiple scales interacted in making SEL–PSS policy in Lebanon.

An empirical analysis of the policy actors, factors, and discourses behind the SEL policies and programs provides evidence for supporting the notion that SEL became a traveling global policy. In particular, the context, the transnational discourse, and program model associated with SEL could be well understood with the concept of assemblage, in which seemingly conflicting ideologies and actors are drawn together to strategically move the policy agenda forward (Gorur, 2016; Ong & Collier, 2005; Rizvi & Lingard, 2011; Robertson, 2018). The concept of assemblage is applicable because of the ideological alignment of SEL with multiple mainstream development paradigms as discussed in the earlier section on framing strategy.

Mobilizing the SEL–PSS Policy: Transnational Policy Network

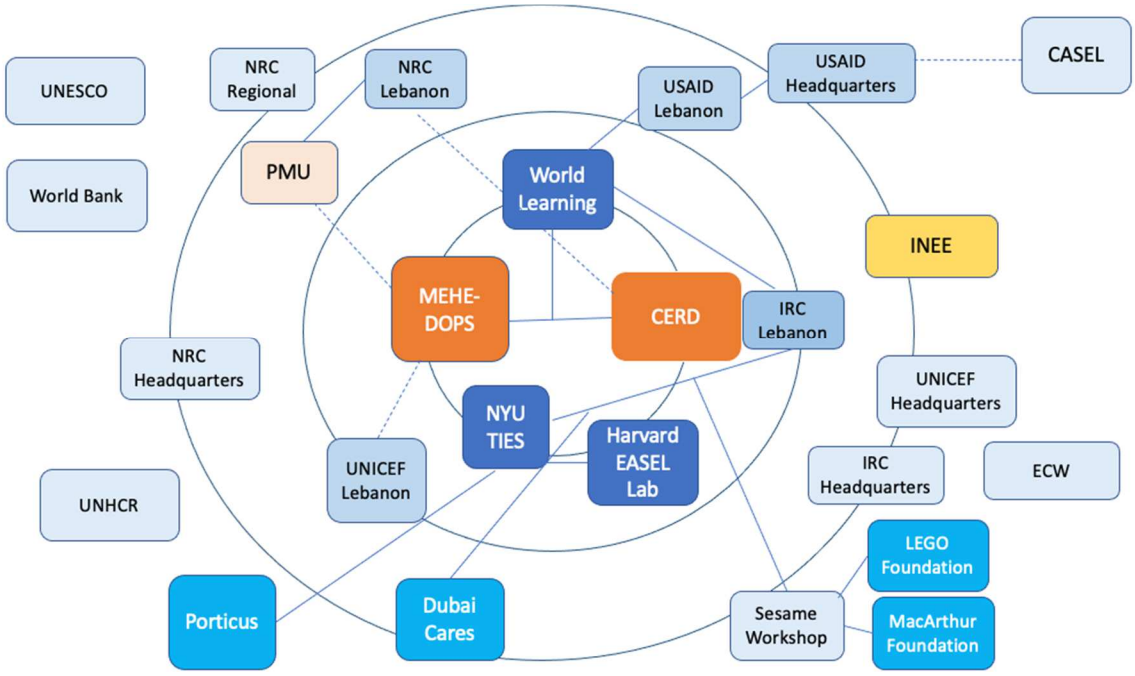
Once the SEL–PSS discourses and approaches were successfully deterritorialized and framed as global programs, my findings support the notion that SEL–PSS policy and programming became institutionalized in Lebanon through dynamic and multiscalar interactions of actors comprising the transnational policy network (Peck & Theodore, 2015). The SEL–PSS policies were mobilized in both "soft" and "hard" forms of policy transfer (Stone, 2004). The transnational SEL–PSS policy network included university-based research hubs or think tanks (e.g., NYU TIES, Harvard EASEL Lab), bilateral donors (e.g., USAID), Lebanese intermediaries (e.g., World Learning), multilateral

governmental organizations (e.g., UNICEF), INGOs (e.g., IRC, NRC), transnational network agents (e.g., INEE), and philanthropic foundations (e.g., Porticus), as well as international consultants. The concept can be understood as actors of the networks "loosely connected with varying degrees of institutional leverage located in multiple sites that are not always even geographically fixed" (Peck & Theodore, 2015, p. xxvi).

The governance of the SEL–PSS policy and programs in Lebanon depicted in Figure 6 based on my findings is aligned with previous scholarship on the complex global governance of education with the rise of non-state actors (Menashy, 2016; Mundy et al., 2016), transnational advocacy networks (Lopes Cardozo & Novelli, 2018; Mundy & Murphy, 2001), think tanks (Stone, 2004, 2012), more broadly transnational knowledge networks (Sending, 2019), multistakeholder partnerships (Menashy, 2018, 2019), and corporate actors (Zakharia & Menashy, 2020). The key actors involved in the "hard transfer of policy" that took place in recent years with the QITABI 2 project appear at the center of Figure 6 between national policy-makers (MEHE–DOPS and CERD) and transnational actors (World Learning, NYU TIES, and Harvard EASEL Lab, IRC Lebanon). The color of the actors in Figure 6 represents the types of policy actors examined in this research: transnational–national actors are represented in blue, national policy-makers in orange, INEE in yellow, and philanthropic foundations in bright sky blue. Straight lines indicate direct relationships between two actors, whereas dotted lines indicate indirect relationships. The tones of each color represent the extent of policy actors' involvement in SEL institutionalization initiatives. For example, within national policy-makers (orange), MEHE-DOPS and CERD were identified to be core actors participating in the process; but the PMU participated to a lesser extent. The three

Figure 6

A Complex Web of Policy Actors at Multiple Scales Making SEL–PSS Policy in Lebanon



circular shapes represent the spatial proximities of the actors in the national SEL policy-making processes. The "soft form of transfer," the global norm-setting of holistic education globally and in Lebanon took place more extensively over the past decade through multiple types of transnational policy actors in the figure (Stone, 2004, p. 562). More details on the roles key knowledge entrepreneurs, humanitarian coordination structures, INGOs, and think tanks played in Lebanon appear below. Interaction across these knowledge entrepreneurs is described at the end of the section.

While SEL–PSS terminologies, guidance notes, and tools were being consolidated through INEE's EiE governance structure at the global scale, the UNHCR-led refugee coordination system and education sector working group, set up at the beginning of the Syrian refugee influx, performed the role of a strategic selective structure in Lebanon.

The global humanitarian actor-led response architecture inherently valorized transnational actors over national–local actors because of their familiarity with the system when setting EiE sector-wide strategies and standards, reflecting the mechanisms of agential selectivity. For example, through the structure set up early on, transnational actors, including UNICEF and a few INGOs—Mercy Corps, Save the Children, and World Vision—led to the development of the No Lost Generation Strategy, the first regional education, child protection, and youth-focused coordinated strategic framework responding to the Syrian refugee crisis beyond Lebanon (No Lost Generation, 2019).

EiE standards, tools, and approaches were prioritized and introduced by transnational–national actors in Lebanon; they were embodied members of transnational policy networks headquartered in the Global North (Peck & Theodore, 2010). The process of developing the Contextualized Lebanon Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies could be explained as an effect of agential selectivity and technological selectivity. Introduced as "the only global tool that articulates the minimum level of educational quality and access in emergencies through to recovery," the INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery Handbook gained an authoritative status in Lebanon (INEE & Lebanon Education Working Group, 2014, p. 7). The contextualization and mainstreaming process were facilitated by transnational actors, including INEE, UNESCO, NRC, and UNICEF (INEE & Lebanon Education Working Group, 2014). The positioning of INEE as "norm entrepreneurs," whose power mainly lay in soft forms of legitimate knowledge was, therefore, already exercised early on as the examples in Lebanon show (Stone, 2012, p. 494).

While national SEL policy was recently initiated by bilateral and multilateral governmental organizations (USAID and UNICEF), INEE's PSS–SEL subgroup members, including IRC, NRC, UNRWA, played crucial roles as policy entrepreneurs who adopted the global SEL–PSS discourse and practices in Lebanon during the selection phase (2014–2017) described in Chapter 4 (Chaqués-Bonafont, 2019). These INGOs and international organizations more broadly had been key providers of SEL–PSS programs and policies in NFE settings prior to the SEL–PSS institutionalization initiatives in the formal education system, which contributed to the soft form of transfer in Lebanon.

Similarly, my findings show that the INGOs in Lebanon were not only influential in the governance of SEL–PSS programs in NFE settings. A few INGOs were involved in the initiatives that worked directly with the national education system at the time of the data collection, and others were interested to find further opportunities to work with the Lebanese government. INGO key informants in my study reported their interest in institutionalizing their NFE program models in the formal education system to scale up the programs' impact and to strengthen the organizations' credibility for future funding opportunities. The finding aligns with previous literature on INGOs' interest in the ensuring of their externally funded programs (Burde, 2004). My interview data indicated that in addition to NRC, IRC was well regarded as an experienced leading agency with SEL programming in Lebanon and therefore was globally positioned as a preferred implementing partner by policy actors across multiple projects. IRC had been most extensively engaged in SEL programming and policy among NGOs in both NFE and the formal education settings in Lebanon based on its SEL-infused Healing Classroom program model, which had been in place in Lebanon since 2014. Although not explored

extensively in this study, the landscape of transnational SEL–PSS policy actors was messy and complex beyond the organization types discussed, including media education actors (e.g., Sesame Workshop, Big Bad Boo Studios), philanthropic foundations (e.g., the LEGO Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation), and transnational network organizations (e.g., Teach for All).

The role of think tanks, more specifically United States university-based policy labs like NYU TIES and Harvard EASEL Lab, appeared prominent in the national SEL policy-making (Stone, 2004, 2012) in Lebanon. Both research labs played key roles as idea brokers in influencing the SEL–PSS agenda setting and policy-making through the soft transfer of knowledge based on their perceived technical capacity and legitimacy in the national SEL–PSS policy-making processes in Lebanon (Stone, 2012). Findings focused on the influence of the research labs in the development of the national SEL framework, and the research–practice partnership between NYU TIES and IRC's Healing Classroom began in Lebanon in 2016. The partnership used the Harvard EASEL Lab's brain games module developed for schools in the United State in its SEL implementation and research; therefore, the process exemplified the adaptation of a United States-based SEL program and evidence in Lebanon.

The SEL–PSS policies and programs were mobilized through the interactions of these policy actors who contributed to the soft form of policy transfer through political, economic, and ideational factors. The research consortium funding that NYU TIES was granted from Porticus, a philanthropic foundation, enabled an interesting interaction that led to the partnership between NYU TIES and World Learning and thus the national SEL framework development initiative. As SEL–PSS became an INEE-sponsored global

education policy idea, INEE with support from NRC hosted the PSS–SEL Roundtable as a learning event in Florence, Italy, in 2017, which further allowed various policy actors across the world to mobilize for the SEL–PSS policy agenda, which can be viewed as an effect of technological selectivity. Both NYU TIES and World Learning were invited as presenters at the learning event; until then, no official interaction had taken place between the two entities.

As a separate event, while World Learning was still implementing QITABI 1 (an early grade reading project), in response to the new education policy USAID released a request for proposal for QITABI 2 in which SEL was a one of three major outcomes (USAID, 2018). World Learning successfully won the QITABI 2 grant as an implementing partner. The organization was able to integrate and expand the Porticus-funded national SEL framework and measurement tools development into the QITABI 2 project design in which NYU TIES was involved as a resource partner. This encounter aligned with previous scholarship in which global education policy ideas were framed and disseminated through influential persons, events, working groups, and policy briefs and reports organized by international organizations, bilateral aid agencies, and INGOs—in CPE terms as a form of selectivity (Ball, 1990; Verger, 2012; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018). This serves as a clear example of the way transnational policy networks are formed, loosely connected for the same or similar policy goals, in this case advocating and advancing the institutionalization of SEL–PSS, through events, technological apparatuses, and actors sometimes in distinct locations.

Politics of Formulating SEL–PSS Policies: Recontextualization

Transnational actors' influence on SEL–PSS policy-making was the focus of earlier sections in which the following were examined: (a) the processes of setting SEL–PSS as a global policy solution, (b)framing strategies of SEL; alignment with dominant ideologies and paradigms, and (c) mobilizing the SEL–PSS policy: transnational policy network. This section focuses on the SEL–PSS policy adoption through recontextualization processes by highlighting the roles of intermediaries and national policy-makers. The agenda of transnational policy networks is not always as successfully formulated as national policy, and as described in Chapter 4, national policy-makers are still the official authority of policy formation and adoption (Carnoy, 2016). In the case of national SEL–PSS policy-making processes, the role of "comprador groups of intermediaries" was substantial in realizing the effort in the national education system (Dale, 2018, p. 294).

In my findings, Lebanese professionals at World Learning and also UNICEF in Lebanon could be considered the comprador group of intermediaries. National policy-makers' interest in institutionalizing SEL–PSS was attributed mainly to political and economic reasons associated with harmonization, international standards, evidence and quality control, and international funding opportunities as presented in Chapter 4; but the political and economic drivers were also the outcomes of sociocontextual (e.g., influx of Syrian refugees, vulnerable public education system, recent series of crises) and cultural–discursive factors (e.g., SDGs, adoption of child rights legal frameworks), all of which were also transnational in nature. After reviewing the crucial role intermediaries played

in institutionalizing SEL–PSS policies, evidence indicating the structural influence of transnational discourse on domestic politics follows.

Earlier studies on global education policy-making have suggested the power of intermediary actors or brokers. Findings from my research show Lebanese professionals operating at the interfaces of various worldviews and knowledge systems and reveal their importance in negotiating roles, relationships, and representations, significant in promoting SEL–PSS in the national education system in Lebanon (Mosse & Lewis, 2006; see also Silova & Steiner-Khamsi, 2008). World Learning, particularly a few high-level Lebanese staffers, played key roles in enabling the SEL–PSS policy-making processes as an effect of agential selectivity, based on their established networks in the Ministry. Those few key high-level Lebanese staffers were usually Lebanese education professionals who had not only earned doctorates in the United States or Europe but who also had extensive in-country professional teaching experience. Employed by World Learning, they oversaw at least two projects, and the Chief of Party remained the same throughout the three projects. Aligned with earlier studies documenting the influence of civil society actors, including INGOs (Burde, 2004; Macpherson, 2016; Mundy et al., 2010; Mundy & Murphy, 2001), World Learning was particularly successful because of professional staffers whose academic background allowed them to be attuned with global discourses on education. Through World Learning, USAID indirectly exercised influence and power in national SEL–PSS policy-making processes.

My findings also suggest the local intermediaries' (e.g., World Learning) key role in mediating domestic politics. This aligned with previous critical education policy studies, the authors of which described the existence of "diverging, sometimes

contradictory interests, priorities, and agenda of different factions of the state" (Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018, p. 9; see also Dale, 2005). Numerous key informants spoke about the long-existing tensions between the curriculum entity—CERD—and the guidance and counseling unit—DOPS—and World Learning's relative success in engaging both entities throughout the national SEL framework development process. Beyond World Learning, I found a significant number of other entities (e.g., UNICEF) that mediated the political interest of the Lebanese government and multilateral or bilateral organizations, which were created as an effect of structural selectivity by transnational geopolitical interests. For example, my interview data showed that the system within MEHE and CERD was deemed by transnational actors as ineffective, yet transnational actors had reinforced existing structural divisions within the ministry and further created a parallel structure (e.g., PMU), which propelled tensions to another level.

National policy-makers in my research reaffirmed the political and economic rationale of adopting SEL initiatives in the national education system; furthermore, the influence of the transnational in domestic politics was evident, aligning this study with earlier critical education policy studies (Altinyelken, 2018; Dale, 2018; Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe, 2006). The concept of "imagined globalization," asserted by policy borrowing and lending theorists, is useful: National policy-makers reference international standards or best practices in presumed international education space, where national–states' education systems converge to move forward with necessary education reform in country (Schriewer & Martinez, 2004; Steiner-Khamsi, 2012; Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe, 2006). This can be considered an effect of structural and discursive selectivities. A similar

influence of the semantics of globalization in the Lebanese education system was found in the PSS Activity Booklet published by MEHE and UNICEF (2019):[35]

> To rise to the global standard, using a social and emotional learning curriculum to strengthen the Child Protection Policy in School is recommended. Psychosocial counselors at DOPS anticipated that the use of this type of curriculum would facilitate congruence with required complementary measures at a later stage and ensure that the work of teachers and other educational employees aligns with global standard. (p. 23)

National policy-makers in this research similarly shared the discourse on catching up with the international trend by integrating SEL into the national education system.

SEL–PSS policy ideas and terminology were largely decided and introduced by transnational organizations; however, national policy-makers exercised their agency by adopting SEL–PSS *discourse* but not necessarily SEL–PSS *practice* through extensive recontextualization (Silova, 2002; Steiner-Khamsi, 2012). Unlike INGOs in Lebanon that were likely to adopt their respective headquarters' global program models as the whole package of SEL competencies and related teaching and learning materials with a limited contextualization, therefore adopting both discourse *and* practice, national policy-makers strategically aligned and assembled multiple donor projects with a broad vision of the ministry. This was possible because all SEL–PSS initiatives were largely managed and handled by the psychosocial counseling unit at DOPS and because the head of the unit was also actively engaged in the development of its national SEL-PSS strategy.

The recontextualization process, mainly by developing the national SEL framework, indicated the national policy-makers' resistance to and hesitance about

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[35] The official version of the booklet was published in Arabic, and an unofficial translation was used for purpose of this study.

similar previously implemented activities with borrowed competencies framework and teaching and learning materials. The national policy-makers perceived global SEL frameworks like CASEL as culturally and contextually incongruent with the Lebanese school system. They used the preferred language of donors with the same activity booklet, for example, to UNICEF, PSS; to USAID, SEL; and overall, within the framework of Child Protection Policy in School because the Child Protection Policy in School was officially enacted ministerial policy. My findings in Lebanon aligned with global education policy literature, in which the activities implemented in the schools would likely be a bricolage of various activities borrowed as bits and pieces from multiple programming approaches (Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018).

Although this research has focused on and revealed much about the institutionalization of SEL–PSS in the national education system, what has been presented thus far points to multiscalar governance of SEL–PSS by various actors in Lebanon (Dale, 2005). Transnational actors drove the policy agenda of SEL–PSS with funding, but such policy was ultimately established through the interaction of transactional actors and national policy actors, including local intermediaries. Transnational actors were also diverse—they spanned think tanks, private philanthropical donors, INGOs, and consultants. Education at public schools was still largely governed at the national level both through first and second shift schools and the regulation of the sector through certification. At the same time, INGOs as well as national–local actors also played crucial roles in complementing the public education system—sometimes as sole providers of education for those refugee students who were out of school—but their roles were limited only to such aspects, and they were unable to contribute to the SEL–

PSS policy-making process. The following subsection focuses on local actors who were left out of the multiscalar SEL–PSS policy-making processes.

Relegating Local Actors to the Background in Multiscalar SEL–PSS Policy-Making

The SEL–PSS policy-making processes reviewed thus far—setting SEL–PSS as a global policy solution, framing strategies, mobilizing SEL–PSS policies, and the politics involved in formulating them—have demonstrated that national education policy is no longer produced only at the national level but through multiscalar processes across policy actors and other factors. The policy-making was multiscalar, occurring between transnational and national actors but not at the level of local actors. Global education policy generates a variety of opportunities for the groups in this research; transnationally developed SEL–PSS policies not only created national intermediaries who benefited from the processes but also disadvantaged groups (Dale, 2018). Based on my research, I found that local actors—teachers and students—were largely relegated to the background in national SEL–PSS policy-making processes. Ironically, the structural selectivity and agential selectivity that privileged the policy actors in power, including transnational–national actors and national policy-makers, disadvantaged local-level actors. Contractual teachers at public schools and Syrian refugee children in Lebanon were found particularly vulnerable and likely to be further disadvantaged during the processes. I discuss each of these groups of local actors in turn below.

In my study, teachers were unaware of the national SEL–PSS policy initiatives and could therefore be considered relegated to the background in the policy-making processes despite the expectation that they would implement the policies in classrooms once those policies were endorsed. This finding aligned with previous literature that

depicted teachers as generally unaware of policies formulated by national education authorities (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010) or only assumed them to be implementers of already produced policies (Ball, 2016) in different contexts. Scholars who have focused on sociocultural perspectives on thinking about policy have shown how teachers' perspectives and appropriation of a globally constructed policy, for example, learner-centered pedagogy, varied depending on local contexts (Altinyelken, 2018; Bartlett & Vavrus, 2017). The design of the national SEL framework development project that included the validation of a draft of that framework by teachers and principals and data collection planned in about 20 schools in April 2021, therefore, ensured some effort to include local actors' perspectives, albeit limited; but none of the teachers in this study took part.

Engaging teachers in validating the national SEL framework planned by transnational–national actors and national policy-makers was still an improved step toward contextualization, but it seemed to be more a tokenistic process than genuinely open for any significant change. National policy-makers in this research shared their interest in understanding teachers' perceptions on the agreed-upon competencies in the national SEL framework, but the information was considered to be more useful for implementation. The assumption was that teacher insights would not inform the overall design or approach of the SEL policy but would still be useful in devising SEL teaching and learning materials for the implementation. Unfortunately, national policy-makers did not seem to consider teachers as local policy actors to be engaged and consulted during the design of the national policies. Critical education policy researchers also found

teachers to be viewed only as policy translators and implementers (Ball, 2012b; Ozga, 2000).

Most of the teachers were unfamiliar with the particular global term or approach that SEL implied, but they were all receptive of the principles underlying SEL, specifically that teaching should engage students beyond academic knowledge. Similar to previous studies in other contexts in the Global South (Altinyelken, 2018; Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe, 2006), interviewed teachers perceived SEL as more advanced or modern than teaching only academic content; they used descriptive terms such as "global standard" and "more practical, advanced" approach. Although self-reporting, most of the teacher key informants explained how their daily teaching practices included efforts to further engage students; however, they did not believe that the current form of policy enactment by the MEHE would make a difference in their daily teaching practices involving the integration of the social and emotional aspects of learning. According to the teachers, curriculum reform integrating SEL would be the only way that MEHE policy could be systematically implemented at the school level. Acknowledging the importance of helping students become more engaged in their learning, they also depicted contradictory realities at schools; these would likely hinder such practices because of more pressing systemic issues. Most teachers deeply mistrusted the government; in fact, the sentiment was stronger for public school teachers because MEHE policies were perceived to have limited influence on private schools and NFE centers.

During the time of data collection from public school teachers (January to February 2021), two of the three contractual teachers were on strike, refusing to teach for

months, mostly because of the delayed payment of salary by the MEHE. The issue of irregular payments to the contractual teachers garnered sympathy across all teacher participants and was widely recognized as a critical problem in the Lebanese teacher management system. All teachers were outraged about the financial hardship, but the contractual teachers were perceived as further disadvantaged because they had not been paid even once since the beginning of the school year in September 2020. Contractual teachers at public schools—particularly those teaching both first and second shifts without regular payment and social welfare support like health insurance—were the object of both sympathy and scrutiny. Contractual teachers, even if they were supposed to be paid with monthly salaries, had been paid generally once or twice during an entire school year, or if lucky, quarterly, depending on the school principals. Because of unclear standards in employing contractual teachers, these teachers were also objects of scrutiny by most of other teachers, including those teaching at private schools: Many thought they might have gained employment because of their political affiliations with local political leaders, an issue raised multiple times. SEL was understood as a new teaching approach for teachers, and other teachers disparaged contractual teachers' competence to implement advanced teaching approaches like SEL.

Another key group of the population worth mentioning comprised Syrian refugee children and youth. This group had been omitted from the discussion and would likely be further disadvantaged by the overall education policy changes in the Lebanese education system, including the SEL–PSS policies. As described earlier in Chapters 4 and 5, overall discourses in education policy in Lebanon shifted from a focus on Syrian refugees during the humanitarian approaches (RACE I) to vulnerable Lebanese host children with the

development approach (RACE II strategy). At the heart of the discourse was the notion that Lebanese are as vulnerable as Syrian refugees, a situation that became stronger after multiple crises since the October 2019 revolution, the COVID-19 pandemic, the Beirut Blast, and the financial crisis. Without a doubt all Lebanese became vulnerable particularly because of the financial crisis. That said, the additional vulnerabilities of the Syrian refugee population had previously existed because of their legal status as refugees or undocumented persons, insecure living conditions, lack of employment rights, and discrimination by the Lebanese population. Although such vulnerabilities would further disadvantage and marginalize Syrian refugees, the need to focus on Syrian refugees and children had been diluted.

Specifically, regarding SEL–PSS programs and policies, my findings suggest that Lebanese students were similarly perceived as vulnerable as the Syrian refugees and that second shift schools would automatically benefit from SEL–PSS. This assumption was also apparent in the RACE II strategy (2017–2021) as well as in previous studies (e.g., Adelman et al., 2019). These notions emerged as the effect of discursive selectivity, an undifferentiated portrayal of Lebanese and refugee populations with potentially different vulnerabilities. Based on my findings, unless a more explicit strategy is developed for the implementation of SEL–PSS policies in second shift schools, Syrian refugee students will likely be further disadvantaged as an effect of structural selectivity because of systemic domestic political tensions in the Lebanese MEHE. The assumption was that SEL–PSS policy initiatives would also benefit second shift schools because both first and second shift schools belong to the national formal education system.

In reality, however, the second shift schools for Syrian refugee students administered by the PMU, a parallel structure established to handle most of the international funding, were managed significantly differently—as "temporarily separate schools" (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2018, p. 10). In addition, one of the crucial rationales in which national policy-makers engaged in the national SEL framework development process was the harmonization of entities within the MEHE, a need that arose from profound tension. This aligns with challenges to the methodological statism emanating from critical education policy studies, in which the state is assumed to be a "cohesive entity" when, in fact, factions within the same government have diverging interests and policy priorities (Dale, 2005; Steiner-Khamsi, 2010; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018).

Transnational actors involved in the SEL framework development verified an almost unspoken rule that disallowed the discussion of specific issues pertinent to second shift schools and Syrian refugee students to be openly discussed by MEHE and CERD, requiring further scrutiny of the assumption that second shift schools would benefit equally from the initiative. QITABI's midterm report provided a glimpse into the reality of the potential marginalization of second shift schools during the implementation. A 2017 QITABI report described how first and second shift school students did not have the same access to resource rooms at the schools: "Access to libraries and ICT equipment is primarily for first shift students as principals in many schools restrict the use in second shifts for maintenance purposes." Additional physical and verbal violence and discrimination often faced by Syrian refugee students at second shift schools were recognized by multiple key informants of this research as well as in previous literature

(Adelman et al., 2019; Buckner et al., 2018), all of which required policy actors to address additional barriers to effectively implement national SEL policies in second shift schools.

In summary, the synthesis highlighted the SEL–PSS policy-making processes as an effect of the four selectivities with focus on both the structural and discursive conditions that enabled the policy-making and the key roles policy actors played in transferring policies at multiple scales. The foregoing synthesis tied key concepts appearing during those processes to the scholarly literature on critical policy studies and education in emergencies. In the first subsection, I focused on the role of INEE as a strategic agent in deterritorializing SEL and PSS as global discourse and practices, constructing the global model to be transferred elsewhere. The second subsection included a discussion of the ideological alignment with evolving development paradigms and policy approaches in the EiE field, which framed SEL as a particularly attractive model to be emulated. In the third subsection a complex transnational policy network was described for its role in mobilizing SEL–PSS to crisis-affected Lebanon, focusing on knowledge entrepreneurs, humanitarian coordination structure, INGOs, and think tanks. The focus of the fourth subsection was SEL–PSS policy adoption through recontextualization processes, including the roles of intermediaries and national policy-makers. The final subsection highlighted the multiscalar SEL–PSS policy-making processes that excluded local actors and particularly contractual teachers at public schools; Syrian refugee students were further discussed as potentially disadvantaged in the national SEL–PSS policy-making process and its implementation. Based on the

synthesis, in the following section I revisit the conceptual framework and provide additional insights to revise the conceptual framework.

Revisiting the Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Concepts

In constructing the conceptual framework of this research,[36] I attempted to connect a practice-oriented field—education in emergencies—to a theory-oriented field—critical education policy studies—particularly with CPE analytic frameworks (Jessop, 2010; Sum & Jessop, 2013). The framework was used to delineate the context of Lebanon and analyze how and why SEL, as an example of a globally travelling policy, had been selected and retained as part of the national education policy. I analyzed SEL discourses and practices emerging from the research, using the policy and programming approaches in EiE contexts (Dryden-Peterson, 2016; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013). The idea was to understand how, why, and to what extent SEL discourse and practices had evolved from a humanitarian approach to one focusing on development and peace in the intersections of the humanitarian–development–peace nexus.

In this section, I first discuss how CPE analytical frameworks and key theoretical concepts from critical policy studies constituted an appropriate means to analyze the research findings. Next, I briefly explain how the research findings contributed to the evolutionary mechanisms of CPE. Then, I explain how my findings offer more nuance to the CPE framework and how the concept of power in global governance and policy mobilities theory complemented the theorization of my findings. I proceed to the humanitarian–development–peace nexus policy and programming approaches in EiE. I

[36] See Figure 1 in Chapter 1.

first describe how the humanitarian, development, peacebuilding, or security discourses were used in constructing the need for PSS or SEL as global solutions in Lebanon. Then, I further elaborate how my data helped facilitate an understanding of the concept of peace in the nexus. Finally, I introduce the resilience approach to education policies and programming in EiE, a prominent discourse and approach by the key informants in Lebanon. At the end of the section, I propose a revised conceptual framework of the research.

CPE Analytical Frameworks and Theoretical Concepts From Critical Policy Studies

The CPE frameworks were useful in organizing SEL–PSS policy and programming over time in Lebanon. In analyzing the drivers of policies, a focus on cultural, political, and economic factors was helpful in maintaining an analysis balance between the policy actor-oriented perspective and a perspective that focuses on macro factors. This framework was also instrumental in understanding the influence of both discursive factors and material factors as policies formulated in the national education system. As expected, however, in Chapter 2, the CPE framework proved insufficient to theorize the complex nature of the underlying mechanisms of the global education policy-making processes used by various policy actors at multiple scales; additional theoretical concepts were needed. The key tenets to which I paid attention from multiple critical education policy theories—(a) power and inequality in critical theory; (b) policy as a complex process; and (c) the pluri-scalar, multilevel, and transnational governance of education—allowed me to complement the CPE framework and to improve the description of SEL–PSS policy-making processes in Lebanon. The complementary

concepts were helpful in balancing the analysis between the policy actor-oriented perspective and a perspective focused on macro factors.

One of the main contributions of my research is the addition of Phase 4 to the CPE evolutionary framework. Phase 4 represents a quick turnaround of variation, selection, and retention because of multiple crises in Lebanon since 2020, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the Beirut Blast, and the financial crisis while Phase 3, the retention period, was still ongoing. In Chapter 4, I emphasized that the use of the "evolutionary mechanism" was based on challenges and resistance to "pre-determined sequences that entail evolutionism" and not on the perspective that linear or universal stages of policy development existed as rationalist approaches to policy studies have suggested (Jessop, 2010, p. 340). This was done by empirically demonstrating how the framework could be applied in a circular manner by adding Phase 4. I must also note that the retention phase was defined liberally because not all initiatives were formally adopted as official policy documents. For example, the national SEL framework was still in the process of finalization, but the level of engagement from two different political entities at the MEHE allowed me to define the phase appropriate to be considered the retention phase. Below, I first discuss (a) power and inequality across policy actors from perspective of global governance and (b) the agency of national policy-makers and national–local actors from the perspective of policy mobilities theory; these two points emerged as theoretical concepts complementary to the CPE analytical frameworks.

Power and Inequality Across Policy Actors: Global Governance of Education Aid

Critical theory-informed CPE analytical frameworks and the notion of global governance revealed how the power dynamic was manifested in national SEL policy-

making processes across policy actors at multiple scales in Lebanon. As described in the synthesis section of this chapter, applying the four modes of selectivities from the CPE framework allowed me to understand the PSS–SEL subgroup of INEE and its members as a strategic selective structure and actors, which elevated the SEL–PSS as a global program model. The notion of global governance was also applicable to the education sector working group and other sectoral coordination mechanisms operating in Lebanon. Through this global aid architecture, some policy actors, particularly those based in the Global North, were positioned to hold stronger "structural power" compared to Lebanese policy-makers (Barnett, 2013; Barnett & Duvall, 2005). Those who held more powerful positions within humanitarian governance structures were often able to exercise "productive power" through "systems of knowledge and discursive power," which further reproduced the power asymmetries (Barnett & Duvall, 2005, p. 53).

Although individuals involved in the national SEL policy-making processes genuinely believed they epitomized collaboration between global and national actors as well as between ministries, the roles undertaken by various policy actors reflected the unequal power dynamics in global education aid architecture in which policy actors in the Global North and the Global South operated. Transnational actors brought in SEL–PSS as a global policy agenda and a program model to be emulated with financial resources. Only then, national policy actors actively maneuvered the global discourse of SEL to strategically assemble internationally funded projects. National policy-makers exercised their power reactively in response to the transnational influence of funding and the policy agenda instead of initiating and actively setting that policy agenda (Dale, 2018). Thus, policy-making power was shared among transnational and national policy actors, but the

amount of power each possessed was still found to differ based on the positions they held within the hierarchical global aid architecture. Policy actors in the Global North, for example research institutions including NYU TIES and Harvard EASEL Lab, were considered "experts" who were to assume powerful positions and provide a roadmap and technical support in the creation of the national SEL framework (Barnett, 2013, p. 392). Therefore, the relationship between transnational–national actors and national policy-makers remained as "symbolic partnership" than "full or inclusive partnership" (INEE, 2010, p. 20; Menashy, 2019).

Power asymmetries were even more evident between national policy-makers and national–local actors, reflecting to some degree the similarly symbolic and unequal partnership between transnational–national actors and national policy-makers. My data in Chapter 4 indicated that national policy-makers strongly supported the idea of inviting teachers and local actors to "validate" the draft national SEL framework, which was developed by transnational–national actors and national policy-makers. However, teachers and national–local actors voiced the need to include teachers and local actors from the outset of education policy formulation and shared their discontent about general exclusion until policies were adopted. Both national policy-makers and transnational–national actors were unwilling to redistribute or share policy decision-making power with teachers, but they assumed teachers would be trained on new education policy and implement such policy at the school level. In the next section I discuss how policy mobilities theory complements an understanding of the globally structured agenda and power.

Agency of National Policy-Makers and National–Local Actors: Policy Mobilities

Theory

Although CPE analytical frameworks were adequate in analyzing macro factors and actor-oriented rationales in formulating and adopting SEL as a transnational education policy, the perspective of policy mobilities theory appeared to be useful and complementary in explaining the agency of national policy-makers and national–local actors. One of the main findings I explained was that the SEL–PSS program and policy-making in Lebanon was not a simple top-down transfer or diffusion of a "best practice" policy but something that evolved through interactions across the actors, events, and the technological apparatus at multiple scales (Peck & Theodore, 2010). National policy-makers interacted with transnational actors in designing the national SEL policy beyond its territorial space in New York, Turkey, and Tunisia with support from well-positioned Lebanese intermediaries. As indicated in my findings in Chapters 4 and 5, national policy-makers strategically verbalized discourses used by donors; but they did not adopt SEL as a complete framework or a package. Instead, they repackaged a variety of internationally funded projects to align with the priorities of a department and those of Lebanese schools.

At the most local level, teachers demonstrated their resistance to the assumption that they would take the role of education policy implementers, indicating that nationally developed education policies would not be implemented successfully at the school level. Teachers gave voice to a strong disconnect between policy developed at the national level and its implementation at the local level because teachers had been excluded from the policy-making processes as equal partners. Teachers' mistrust was most strongly expressed toward national policy-makers, but they also shared skepticism towards

transnational–national actors in devising education policies for Lebanese teachers and students. Because attention is given to the way policy mutates and is remade in policy mobilities theory, it seemed suitable for theorizing interactive national and local-level SEL–PSS policy-making processes with emphasis on the agency of national and local level actors.

Humanitarian–Development–Peace Nexus: Approaches to Policy and Programming in EiE

Regarding the three approaches to policy and programming in EiE depicted in the conceptual framework, my findings indicated the shift of discourse and practice from humanitarian to development approaches in Lebanon from 2011 to 2021. The humanitarian approach was represented by PSS discourse focusing on short-term psychosocial well-being, and the development approach was represented by SEL discourse focusing on improving the quality of education in public schools. The approach or goal to use SEL–PSS for a security or a peacebuilding objective was also detected in the discourse on policies restricting migration to Europe in Phase 2. Evidence was found in education policy documents (e.g., USAID) that education programming was expected to contribute to changing aggressive behaviors of children and youth to prevent them from joining any radical movements that may be a threat to the West, but conflicting perspectives on this emerged among the key informants. NGO and UN agencies key informants agreed that some focus was placed on peacebuilding and security discourses at the height of the European refugee crises, but the general sense among education sector partners was that such discourses were no longer prevalent in Lebanon. The key informants further emphasized that even during this time, the perspectives or intentions

of policy actors who implemented the education programs were not based on security approaches.

In addition to the "peace" approach in the development–humanitarian–peace nexus, one other aspect that emerged from the data points was that key informants primarily spoke from the perspective of *negative peace* instead of actively seeking *positive peace* (Galtung, 1969). Although SEL had become a signifier representing education programming approaches to promote nonacademic skills and competences, including peace education approaches, the term "peace" was no longer used in the organizations in Lebanon according to representatives interviewed. Key informants perceived focusing on individual-level character and skills building as manageable and more preferrable approaches than striving to achieve peace at the macro level. The national focus on social cohesion and peacebuilding in earlier phases of education reform was reported in Lebanon (Shuayb, 2016, 2018), but my findings during the more recent 10 years indicated a shift in the discourse from building national identity to building more individual-level skills and competencies through education.

The absence of violence, defined as *negative peace*, appeared as a key theme in the popularity of SEL–PSS policy and programming approaches in Lebanon. The approach mainly aims to transform and socialize individual behaviors and attitudes to bring social change in crisis-affected contexts (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016; Higgins & Novelli, 2020; Novelli et al., 2017). The child protection approach, designed to ensure the absence of physical, psychological, and verbal violence in schools, was prevalent in Lebanon, especially from the standpoint of DOPS as well as the PSS approaches in NFE programs. A telling example was the "Peace Building in Lebanon" project, funded by the

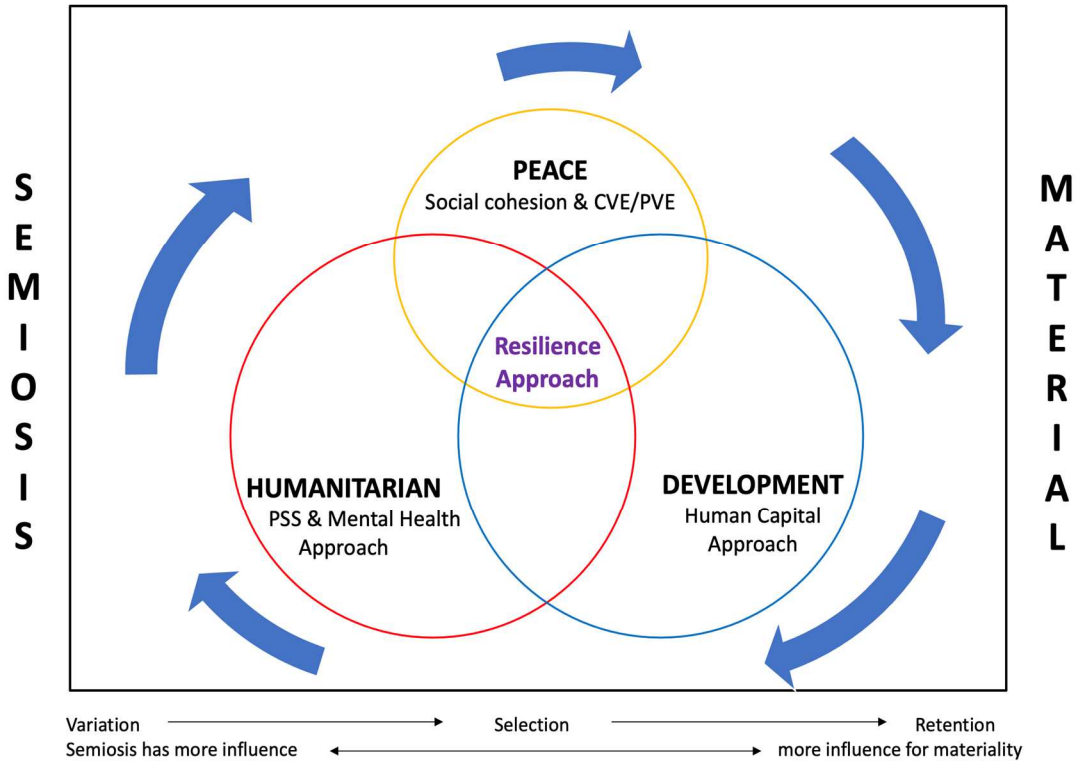
United Nations Development Programme and implemented by DOPS. It was a project associated with a research participant I interviewed and labeled as a peace or peacebuilding project, but the focus was on building individual-level competencies in tolerance and nonviolent communications, which was perceived as similar to PSS and SEL by a key informant. Although a meaningful and necessary step forward, particularly with the endorsement of the Child Protection Policy in schools, paying attention to structural and cultural forms of violence and barriers is necessary in a complex context like Lebanon to prevent the further marginalization of refugees and diverse ethnic and religious minorities in public education spaces.

Building on the forgoing discussion on peace, another contribution of this research is its empirical evidence of the rise of the resilience approach in EiE in the conceptual framework. Traditionally used as an approach for disaster risk reduction, the resilience approach, at least in the discourse, appeared prominent during this research as an overlapping space among humanitarian, development, and peace. The resilience approach appeared salient, especially in education in Lebanon, where the building of individual-level empowerment and skills was deemed crucial to overcome barriers and prepare for an uncertain future, especially for crisis-affected populations (Hilhorst, 2018; Ilcan & Rygiel, 2015). Both the qualitative content analysis and the key informant interviews pointed to the discourse on resilience, but the focus remained on the individual responsibility-oriented conception of resilience, in which more critical and transformative forms of resilience encompass a social justice perspective, aligning with the previous research (Chandler, 2014; Shah et al., 2020).

Figure 7 represents the revised conceptual framework, in which further findings have been added to my original conceptual framework. I added the resilience approach in the section where humanitarian, development, and peace overlap in the Venn diagram. I also reduced the size of the peace section in the diagram in comparison to humanitarian and development sections because of the limited association of SEL–PSS discourse with peace. The blue arrows around the Venn diagram indicate the iterative processes of the CPE framework—variation, selection, and retention—representing the policy mobilities theory that is neither top-down nor bottom-up. In the following section I discuss the implications of this research.

Figure 7

A Revised Conceptual Framework



Implications and Recommendations for Future Research, Policy, and Practice

The findings and discussion of this study potentially yield the following six implications and recommendations for future research, policy, and practice beyond its contribution to conceptual frameworks and theoretical concepts: implications for (a) SEL and related education research in EiE, (b) SEL practice in the Global South, (c) critical education policy studies, (d) global governance of humanitarian and development aid, (e) global education policy research methodology, and (f) research and practice in the Global South during the pandemic

Implications for SEL and Related Education Research in EiE

The findings from this study highlight the utility of analyzing SEL and broadly EiE programs from the perspective of "*programme ontologies*, which accounts for how programmes and policies actually work" instead of "*programme*, which is intervention, policy, or innovation" (Dale, 2005, p. 140). The current policy interest and investments in SEL by multilateral and bilateral donors as well as nonstate actors, including INGOs, think tanks, and private philanthropic donors, require further investigation of why, how, and by whom SEL and related education policies and programs have become a transnational policy discourse. However, SEL research to date, has been predominantly conducted from the instrumentalist "what works" perspective, which focuses on examining specific interventions that work while controlling factors that may influence the outcomes of SEL programming. From the critical constructivist and sociocultural policy perspective this is indeed problematic because policy-makers fail to adopt policies based on statistical evidence, choosing instead the possibility that a policy would work (Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018). Dale (2005) put it differently, stating that it is not

"programmes that work; but it is the underlying reasons or resources that they offer subjects that generate change" (p. 141). Thus, this research was undertaken from the perspective of *programme ontologies* to illuminate the underlying mechanisms by which SEL became a global policy solution and by which complex political, economic, social, and cultural factors enabled SEL to be formulated as national education policy in Lebanon.

My research findings uniquely identify how policy actor-oriented endogenous drivers interplayed with exogeneous political, economic, and cultural drivers in the development of SEL into national education policy in Lebanon over time. By uncovering how, why, and by whom SEL became a national education policy in Lebanon, I discovered complex factors and policy actors that must be taken into consideration to successfully integrate SEL into education policy and programs in a crisis-affected context in the Global South.

Future researchers on SEL as a transnational policy discourse could add value by similarly analyzing SEL from the perspective of *programme ontologies* by (a) undertaking SEL research in other crisis-affected contexts in the Global South, and (b) undertaking research focusing on the global promotion of SEL. First, considering the heightened interest in institutionalizing SEL and PSS in national education systems around the world, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, future researchers can focus on national SEL policy-making elsewhere in the Global South to document additional evidence as well as compare underlying mechanisms. Research findings from more than one context could provide useful insights for bilateral and multilateral

organizations as well as national Ministries of Education with an interest in funding and initiating national SEL policies.

Second, future researchers could add value by focusing more specifically on transnational actors at the global level. For example, research focusing on the role of INEE's PSS–SEL sub-group in setting the global norms on holistic learning and the SEL and PSS agenda in global policy could generate insights on the governance of the EiE field. In addition, interviews with headquarters-based policy actors at the multilateral and bilateral organizations that produced the policy texts analyzed in this study could also be an interesting future research topic. Interview data could complement the findings from the critical qualitative content analysis of global policy texts. The findings would show the interaction across bilateral and multilateral agencies and thus provide a better understanding of how they influenced one another and promoted SEL as a global education policy priority. Last, evidence on other types of policy actors who have not been researched extensively, including philanthropic foundations and transnational global networks like Teach for All, is crucial to an understanding of the whole picture of the multiscalar governance of education in crisis-affected contexts.

Implications for SEL Practice in the Global South

The findings of the research have implications for EiE practice that supports social and emotional development and well-being in crisis-affected contexts. The focus on the quality of education and well-being goals beyond access to education is laudable (Burde et al., 2017). Still, EiE programming must allow more diverse and context-relevant SEL approaches in a range of contexts. Findings from this research also contribute to the previous scholarship documenting diverse understanding and practices

of supporting social and emotional well-being of children and youth in the Global South (Boothby, 2008; Jeong, 2019; Jukes et al., 2019). Because of the emergency nature of the EiE programming, traditionally, insufficient attention has been paid to designing education policy and programs from the ground up. Instead, rapid contextualization of Western education policy and models have prevailed as described in the case of many INGO-run programs as shown in this research. The approach taken by Lebanon's MEHE and CERD, facilitated by transnational–national actors in developing a national SEL framework specific to the Lebanese population, is one of the better examples, in which contextually and culturally relevant social and emotional competencies are considered important.

Besides, to ensure the goals of equity and social justice for marginalized populations, in any given context the larger social, economic, and educational inequities must be considered when designing education policies supporting the social and emotional well-being of crisis-affected children, drawing on the research and practice from social justice and liberatory education traditions (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016; Hantzopoulos et al., 2021) as well as SEL practice for minority populations in the United States. Findings from my study indicated that a specific population (e.g., Syrian refugee students) will be further disadvantaged if excluded from the policy. Also, even if the national SEL policies are implemented in second shift schools, unless the underlying causes and concerns of education inequalities are addressed, the mainstream technocratic approach to building SEL skills will likely reproduce unequal social, economic, cultural relations. Hence, educational opportunities and outcomes for vulnerable crisis-affected children and youth may be further stifled as shown in the critique of SEL for minority

populations in the United States (Camangian & Cariaga, 2021; Castro-Olivio & Merrell, 2012; Slaten et al., 2015).

Future research and practice of SEL should leverage the increased interest in culturally relevant SEL programming and research from bilateral and multilateral donors. Researchers should focus on documenting promising practices in addressing inequalities in implementing SEL in crisis-affected Global South in practice. For example, instead of contextualizing a global SEL program model and framework, teacher-led participatory action research was suggested by a research participant to generate culturally sustaining and critical pedagogical approaches fostering children's social and emotional competencies (Bajaj, 2018; Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016; Zakharia, 2017). Other promising practices through contextually sustaining curricula, pedagogy, and fostering transformative agency needs to be further documented to improve SEL practice in crisis-affected and low-income Global South contexts.

Implication for Critical Education Policy Studies

The findings of this research have implications for critical education policy studies by adding empirical evidence in a specific crisis-affected context in the Global South. The study documents the politics of agenda setting and policy formation with the case of SEL as a traveling global education policy, a topic which has not been extensively examined from beyond the perspective of countries in the Global North. In this study, an empirical case was investigated in Lebanon, where SEL and related approaches initially became more popular in NFE settings for refugees than in the national formal education system. By exploring the research participants' perspectives and analyzing policy documents, I have illuminated the complex factors and underlying mechanisms of SEL

policy adoption and formulation processes from the CPE of education perspective (Jessop, 2010; Robertson & Dale, 2015; Sum & Jessop, 2013).

As described in the earlier section, this research also contributes to the policy mobilities theory by showing that SEL–PSS policies underwent extensive recontextualization and that the activities implemented in the schools are more likely borrowed from multiple programming approaches rather than as a complete program model. SEL–PSS program and policy-making in Lebanon was not perceived as a simple top-down transfer or diffusion of a "best practice" policy but something that evolved through interactions across the actors, events, and the technological apparatus at multiple scales (Peck & Theodore, 2010).

Moreover, this is one of the few education policy studies on the Global South in which the agenda setting and policy formation phases were studied. Considering that these two phases tend to be more transnational in nature compared to the time after the policies are adopted and enacted in the national education system, examining that phase could provide useful insights on the dynamics of education policy-making in the era of globalization. Future researchers can focus on documenting the agenda setting and policy formation phases of another traveling global education policy to understand the multiscalar governance of education policy and programming. Beyond SEL, a researcher taking the critical education policy studies perspective could investigate how and why similar global education models and approaches, including PSS, 21st-century skills, transferrable skills, global citizenship education, and education for sustainable development, are prioritized and promoted in various contexts in the Global South.

Implications for Global Governance of Humanitarian and Development Aid

The findings of the research have implications for education policy and practice within the broader global humanitarian and development aid architecture. The detailed accounts of policy actors at all levels and the key drivers of their engagement as well as the contextual, political, economic, and cultural drivers behind national SEL–PSS policy-making identified in this research illuminate the larger structural issues of global humanitarian and development aid architecture (Barnett, 2013; Barnett & Duvall, 2005, Menashy, 2019). With the case of SEL policy-making in Lebanon, the findings of the research demonstrated global education policy intertwined with the deeply unequal global governance of humanitarian and development aid and the power asymmetries between policy actors in the Global North and the Global South. Transnational actors with economic and knowledge authorities particularly influenced the update of a global education policy in the context of the Global South. A thick description of the policy-making processes in the Global South contributed to the body of knowledge on global education policy applying the concept of power from global governance theories (Lopes Cardozo & Novelli, 2018; Menashy, 2018, 2019; Mundy & Verger, 2015; Tikly, 2017).

At the more practical policy implementation level, the study shows that more and more donors, international organizations, and INGOs, have all strived intently to work with national government authorities with the goal of self-reliance of aid programs. In this research, humanitarian and development actors assumed working with the MEHE and the CERD could best ensure the sustainability of education programs. Through this research, however, I have shown that even if the institutionalization of the SEL–PSS policies at the national level were perceived as successful by transnational–national actors and national policy-makers, local actors would not necessarily buy into what was

agreed upon by the national government. Local actors, including teachers not having been engaged in formulating the policies, rightly questioned the transparency and accountability of the national policy-makers in working with foreign donors. Therefore, implementation of the nationally formulated policy would be problematic at the school level.

Future research should undertake a far more serious examination of movement toward national institutionalization to ensure that local policy implementers, teachers, and the beneficiaries of the policies—refugee children and vulnerable Lebanese children—can benefit from the policies and practices. In such environments, transnational–national actors are required to think beyond handing over education policies and programs to national governments. Engaging local actors from the policy formation stage in context-relevant ways could ensure better localization of the education policies (Brinkerhoff, 2019). Future researchers and policy-makers must document the localization of education policies and programs from the perspectives of school-level and community-level actors, including teachers, principals, and parents. Rich accounts of diverse local participants' perspectives collected through various participatory research methods could effectively challenge the unequal power dynamics and hierarchies across global, national, and local actors.

Implication for Global Education Policy Research Methodology

The research design has implications for qualitative global education policy research from the sociocultural perspective or based on critical constructivist approaches. CCS methodology was appropriate to analyze various policy actors at multiple levels simultaneously and to systematically compare policy actors vertically and horizontally. In

this research, I used a modified CCS methodology with conjoining terms relating to the actors to emphasize the fluidity across global, national, and local levels. Following the qualitative research tradition, I did not intend to generalize the findings to another context but to show that the research methodology can be transferrable for research that focuses on actors at all levels—from local to global. Because my intention was to document and compare the policy actors' interactions and perspectives at multiple scales, CCS methodology was the most appropriate, yet limitations exist as I could not delve further into one specific level of actors (e.g., teachers).

Global education policy research typically focuses on policy document analysis and interviewing a small sample of elite policy actors. Future research should examine the perspectives and experiences of policy actors at the local level more extensively to better understand how global and national policy is implemented at the local level, applying CCS methodology. Ethnographic observations on how SEL–PSS policies are appropriated in school contexts with rich description on how teachers, students, principals, and parents understand and appropriate SEL in their specific contexts beyond individual teachers' perspectives would well complement the current research findings.

Implications for Research and Practice in the Global South During the Pandemic

The remote data collection methods applied in this research design have implications for research and evaluation in CIE and the broader field of international development. Despite the limitations (including technological challenges) involved with virtual data collection (using Zoom, WhatsApp, Microsoft Office TEAMS), the process showed a promising alternative to in-person data collection and other in-person gatherings, including conferences and meetings. The COVID-19 pandemic was a one-of-

a-kind emergency that resulted in the most restrictive movements across countries, and it was not vastly different from travel restrictions that have always existed in EiE contexts as a result of security and political reasons. Applying remote data collection methods in the EiE context could be a breakthrough in gathering necessary data in a timely manner, furthermore, remote data collection methods and the ethics associated with them could be refined.

My research findings indicate a potential positive impact the COVID-19 travel restrictions could bring in research and programming approaches, and knowledge production in CIE. Traditionally based on a data extraction model where research participants were often not considered equal as intellectual partners compared to researchers from the Global North (Camfield, 2014), national policy-makers and national–local actors described their expanded technical responsibilities in national SEL–PSS policy-making and implementation processes due to the pandemic. Research participants already considered this consequence as a positive one where they could exercise their agency. In addition, some key informants illustrated the importance of remote meetings and workshops as a means for creating new opportunities for those based in the Global South to engage in the conferences and meetings taking pace in the Global North.

Future researchers could document the positive contribution of the travel restrictions of the researchers and practitioners from the Global North to the Global South in localizing development and humanitarian policy and programs.

Conclusion

This study examining SEL as a globally travelling policy with critical policy studies framing offered an important opportunity to examine how, why, and by whom SEL developed from a transnational policy discourse to a national education policy. Instead of taking an instrumental approach to SEL research utilizing a "what works" approach at an individual program level and focusing on what leads to quality learning and well-being outcomes, this study documented the complexities within which global education policies and programs operate by uncovering the complex policy-making processes and power dynamics across unequal global aid architecture in the Global North and the Global South.

The main findings of this research illuminate the heuristic, longitudinal, and complex processes of SEL policy formulation and adoption in Lebanon in Lebanon, which evolved through interactions across the actors, events, and technological apparatuses at multiple scales, highlighting the unique nature of such processes in a crisis-affected Global South context. The analysis revealed a mismatch between the technification of SEL–PSS as a global solution and the locally specific educational problems it was intended to address. The national SEL policy-making process in Lebanon is perceived as a collaborative one, initiated by transnational–national actors who have power to set the agenda and strategically recontextualized by national policy-makers to align with national political, economic, and cultural priorities. However, based on the perspectives and experiences of national–local actors, implementation at the school level would be questionable because of the endemic mistrust of the Lebanese government

among teachers. SEL–PSS discourses largely remained at the global and national levels and, therefore, relegated local-level actors to the background.

Education establishes routine, fosters relationships and belonging, and most importantly provides hope for the future of crisis-affected children and youth. Specifically in crisis-affected contexts in the Global South, SEL is increasingly framed as a promising policy solution to promote learning and well-being beyond access to education for crisis-affected children. The findings imply much larger structural issues in education aid in crisis-affected contexts in the Global South and call for more collective efforts to address unequal power relations in global aid architecture. By uncovering the complex policy-making processes and power dynamics across multilevel actors, I intended to shed some light on the process and hope that such transparency assists policy actors at all levels by being more aware of the context within which they operate. To be clear, this does not in any way take away from my belief that all the individual research participants who I spoke to are passionate about and striving to improve education policy and programs for crisis-affected children and youth in Lebanon.

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Appendix A. A Matrix Explaining Methods and Rationale for the Study

Research questions *What do I need to know?*	*Why do I need to know this?*	Sampling decisions *Where will I find this data?*	Data collection methods *What kind of data will answer these questions?*	*Whom do I contact for access?*	Data analysis
What were the processes by which SEL developed into national education policies in Lebanon?	To examine the complex processes, drivers (reasons), and circumstances of adopting national SEL policies	Policy documents Global–national humanitarian actors Teachers	Document review (national) Semi-structured interviews	Open source (websites) Previously known practitioners GWU alumni Open source (websites)	Audio–video recording Hand-written notes Memos 1st–2nd cycle of coding
And in particular, how and why did transnational–national actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors influence the institutionalization of national SEL policies?	Within the process, to focus on the role that policy actors at multiple scales and transnational networks have played Within the process, to highlight agency of local, national actors	Transnational–national actors humanitarian actors National policy-makers National–local actors Teachers	Semi-structured interviews (mainly) Document review (national)	Previously known humanitarian practitioners GWU alumni Open source (websites)	Audio–video recording Hand-written notes Memos 1st–2nd cycle of coding
How are discourses on SEL similar or different at the global, national, local levels,	To identify global discourses associated with SEL that might pressure national education reforms	Policy texts (global–national) Transnational–national actors	Document review Semi-structured interviews	Open source (website of each organization)	Critical qualitative content analysis 1st–2nd cycle of coding

Research questions *What do I need to know?*	*Why do I need to know this?*	Sampling decisions *Where will I find this data?*	Data collection methods *What kind of data will answer these questions?*	*Whom do I contact for access?*	Data analysis
and how have they evolved over time?	To identify discourses associated with SEL in Lebanon to understand how it was framed	humanitarian actors National policy-makers National–local actors Teachers			
(a) What are the similarities and differences in the conceptualization of SEL (in the policy texts and in discussion) by transnational–national policy actors, national policy-makers, and national–local actors?	To demonstrate teachers' understanding of SEL is (mis)aligned with those in the policy text and spoken by global–national policy actors	Policy texts (global–national) Global–national humanitarian actors Teachers	Document review (global–national) Semi-structured interviews	Previously known humanitarian practitioners GWU alumni Open source (websites)	Critical qualitative content analysis Audio–video recording Hand-written notes Memos 1st–2nd cycle of coding
(b) How have the problems SEL was intended to address evolved over time?	To analyze how the discourses of problems and aims of SEL has evolved since the right onset of Syrian refugee influx in 2011until now	Policy texts (global–national) Global–national humanitarian actors Teachers	Document review (global–national) Semi-structured interviews	Previously known humanitarian practitioners GWU alumni Open source (websites)	Audio–video recording Hand-written notes Memos 1st–2nd cycle of coding

Note. Adapted from Maxwell, 2013, p.117

Appendix B. Semi-Structured Interview Protocol for Transnational Policy Actors

[Interview questions]

I. Basic Information and warm up

- Can you briefly tell me about what your role is within the organization?
- How long you have been in this position?
- (If an informant is non-Lebanese) How long have you worked in Lebanon?
- How long have you worked in the field of education?

II. Involvement in, perceptions of and expectations on the national education reform process

Now, I will ask questions about education reform in Lebanon.

- I understand that Lebanon is currently undergoing a national education reform. Can you tell me a little more about what is happening with the education reform initiative?
  - What are the major goals of the education reform?
  - What are some other initiatives to achieve those goals?
  - Have there been any changes in the goals since the beginning?

- How did the current education reform process start? When was it?
  - What were the major events or milestones of the education reform?
  - What led to this national education reform?

- How do you perceive the main challenges of the Lebanese education system?

- What role has your organization played in the education reform process?
  - What role have you played in the education reform process?

- Who initiated the current education reform?
  - Who do you think are the main actors playing major roles in the education reform process?
  - Was there any shifting of the major players or actors over time? How?

- Which coordination mechanisms are currently active for education aid in Lebanon?
  - How do you think such coordination mechanisms have facilitated the education reform process in Lebanon?
  - Have there been changes in the education aid approaches and coordination mechanisms since the beginning of the Syrian refugee influx and now?

- How do you think Lebanese education authorities have worked with International governmental and non-governmental organizations to address long-standing education issues?
  - Are you aware of tensions between Lebanese and international actors?
  - (If yes) what were the tensions?
  - (If yes) how do you think these tensions can be resolved?

- What do you think has been the biggest success in the education reform process?
  - Why is it successful?
- What do you think has been the major challenges in the process?
  - What makes it a challenge?

- How do you think the current socio, political, and the economic context in Lebanon has affected the education reform process?
  - How has the broader public sector reform in Lebanon affected the current education reform?
  - How has the recent explosion in August 2020 affected the education reform? Or how do you think it might?
  - How has the COVID 19 affected the education reform process?
  - How has the economic crisis affected the education reform process?
  - How do you think the Syrian refugee influx affected the education reform process?

- How do you think the Lebanese public education system is integrating Syrian refugee students?
  - Has there been any recent changes of policies integrating Syrian refugee students?
  - (If so) What are those changes?
  - Has there been any recent change of practices you noticed in integrating Syrian refugee students?
  - (If so) What are those changes?

- How do you think the current education reform will benefit Syrian refugee students?
  - Why do you think so?

- How do you think the current education reform will further disadvantage Syrian refugee students?
  - Why do you think so?

- How you think the Syrian refugee influx into the public education system resulted into any changes of the Lebanese education system?
  - What are some positive changes?
  - What are some negative changes?
  - Do you have any particular concerns?

III. Involvement in, perceptions of and expectations for the national SEL framework development within the reform process

Now, I would like to shift our focus to the education initiatives supporting social and emotional development of children at the basic education level.

- What do you think are the urgent social and emotional development needs of the vulnerable Lebanese and refugee children at the basic education level?

- How do you understand the term "social and emotional learning"?

- How have schools supported social and emotional development needs of children?
  - What about families, community, and/or religious institutions?
  - Are you aware of any local and/or indigenous forms of social and emotional development support in Lebanon? What are they?

- How have other humanitarian and development actors supported social and emotional development needs of vulnerable Lebanese and refugee children?
  - Has your organization provided social and emotional learning programs in Lebanon?
  - Can you talk a little more about your organization's SEL programs? (Probe if there were series of programs over time)
  - Why did the SEL program start?
  - What problems did the program intend to address?
  - What did the program aim to achieve through the implementation of the SEL programs? How?
  - How do you think the actual change happened as a consequence of the SEL programs? How was the impact measured?

- What other education programs and initiatives have been implemented in Lebanon that support social and emotional development of children?
  - Do you perceive differences between SEL and other education initiatives (e.g., psychosocial support, peace education and character education)?
  - How are they different?

- Globally, the term, social and emotional learning, has increasingly become popular across international humanitarian and development actors. Do you think it is also the case in Lebanon?
  - (If yes) What is your understanding of how SEL is understood by general Lebanese and Syrian populations?
  - (If yes) In what ways, do you think that the term and approach could be a useful one compared to other similar education initiatives?
  - (If no) Why do you think this is not the case?

- Are you aware of the national Social and Emotional Learning Framework that is currently under development as a part of the education reform at the basic education level?
  - (If yes) How are you and your organization involved in the process?
  - (If no) Move to section IV.

- How did the decision to develop the national Social and Emotional Learning Framework come about?
  - What were the major events or milestones of the process?
  - Why did it start?

- What role has your organization played in the process of developing the national Social and Emotional Learning Framework?
  - What role have you played in the education reform process?

- Who initiated the development of the national Social and Emotional Learning Framework?
  - Who do you think is playing a major role in the process?

- Who do you think were influential in convincing the Lebanese government to develop the national Social and Emotional Learning Framework?
  - Who do you think were skeptical about the framework? Why?

- How do you think Lebanese education authorities have worked with International governmental, non-governmental organizations, and international research institutes in developing the national Social and Emotional Learning Framework?
  - How would you describe the relationship between Lebanese and international actors?
  - Are there any particular tensions?
  - (If yes) what were the tensions?

- (If yes) how do you think these tensions can be resolved?

- What do you think is the aim of developing the national Social and Emotional Learning Framework?

- What are communal and societal-level and global goals that the national Social and Emotional Learning framework is trying to achieve in Lebanon?

- How is the initiative related to other initiatives, such as peace education, youth programs under Peacebuilding Fund, and other countering/preventing violent extremism programs?
  - In what ways are they similar or different?

- Do you think the framework is being developed in relation to the Lebanese government's commitment to the broader goal of global citizenship education and education for sustainable development?
  - (If yes) What other similar education programs and initiatives are contributing to the broader goal of global citizenship education and education for sustainable development?
  - How would having the national Social and Emotional Learning framework be helpful in achieving the broader global goals?

- What has been major challenges in developing the national Social and Emotional Learning framework?
  - Why do you think that was the case?

- What challenges do you foresee in implementing the national Social and Emotional Learning Framework in schools, if any?

IV. Closing

- Do you have any other comments or insights you would like to share?

Thank you for taking your time to participate in this research and for sharing your valuable insights. I really appreciate it. I will provide you with a copy of my transcript from this interview in the next few weeks. Feel free to get in touch with me if there is anything you would like to discuss. Also, if necessary, would you consider participating in a follow-up interview.

Appendix C. Summary Profile of Teacher Research Participants

Interview group	Governo-rate	Level of school[37]	Subject	Employm-ent status	Qualificati-on	Total # years of teaching
Public school teachers at both first and second shift schools	Mount Lebanon	primary	English & science	Contractu-al teacher	High school diploma	23 years
	Mount Lebanon	• first shift: secondary • second shift: primary	English	Contractu-al teacher	B.A. & Teaching Diploma	8 years
	Mount Lebanon	• first shift: intermediate • second shift: primary	Science & Math	Contractu-al teacher	B.A. (No teaching diploma)	10 years
Public school teachers of only Lebanese students	Mount Lebanon	secondary	English (mainly) Sociology	Permanent	postgraduat e degrees; B.A. & teaching diploma	20 years
	Mount Lebanon	secondary	English	Permanent	B.A. &diploma	42 years
Private school teachers	North	secondary	English (mainly) Cultural studies	Semiper-manent	M.A. & B.A.	22 years
	North	secondary	Computer Science	Semiper-manent	B.A.	21 years
	Beirut	intermediate	English	Contract	B.A.	4 years
	Beirut	intermediate	Head of the intermediar y school	Semiper-manent	B.A. Teaching diploma; one-year M.A.	34 years
	Akkar	KG–intermediate	Computer	Contract	B.A.	1.5 years

[37]Lebanese education cycles are structured as three years of early childhood education (KG), primary (Grades 1–6), intermediate (Grades 7–9), and secondary (Grades 10–12). The compulsory education in Lebanon includes primary and intermediate education.

Interview group	Governo-rate	Level of school[37]	Subject	Employm-ent status	Qualificati-on	Total # years of teaching
NFE center teachers	Akkar	KG3	All subjects	Contract	B.A.	3 years
	Akkar	KG3	All subjects	Contract	Three-year teaching degree	3 years
	Akkar	KG3	All subjects	Contract	Three-year teaching degree	3 years
	South	KG3	All subjects	Contract	B.A.	3 years
	South	KG3	All subjects	Contract	M.A.	2.5 years

Appendix D. List of Documents Selected for Critical Qualitative Content Analysis

Source	Document	Policy level
USAID	• Education Strategy (2011) • Education Strategy (2018) • Social and Emotional Learning and Soft Skills: USAID Education Policy Brief (2019)	Global
UNICEF	• Every Child Learns: UNICEF Education Strategy 2019–2030 (2019a) • Global Framework on Transferable Skills (2019b) • Mental Health and Psychosocial Technical Note (2019c) • UNICEF Education Strategy 2006–2016 (2007)	Global
UNHCR	• Refugee Education 2030: A Strategy for Refugee Inclusion (2019) • Refugee Education Strategy 2012–2016	Global
EU	• Strengthening Education Systems to Provide Learning for All (2020) • Education in Emergencies in EU-Funded Humanitarian Aid Operations (2019)	Global[38]
ECW	• Strategic Plan 2018–2021 (2018) • Technical Guidance Note on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises (EiEPC) (2021)	Global
World Bank	• Learning for All: Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development (2011) • World Development Report 2018 (2018): Learning to Realize Education's Promise • Ending Learning Poverty: What Will It Take? (2019) • Wherever They Are, Children Must Go to School (2018)	Global
INEE	• INEE Psychosocial Support & Social and Emotional Learning Background Paper (2016) • INEE Guidance Note on Psychosocial Support: Facilitating Psychosocial Well-being and Social and Emotional Learning (2018)	Global
FCDO	• DFID Education Policy: Get Children Learning (2018) • DFID Education in Emergencies Guidance Note: Strengthening Resilience and Response to Crises (2017)	Global

[38]Although the EU is a regional organization among its member states in Europe, it is considered a global policy actor in its development and humanitarian aid to the countries in the Global South. The EU recently released its new strategy to strengthen its role as a key policy actor in the multilateral system, continuously supporting the UN System, Bretton Woods institutions, and other international fora (European Commission, 2021).

Source	Document	Policy level
UNHCR	• Syria Regional Response Plan (2012) • Syria Regional Response Plan (2014)	Regional-National
Government of Lebanon and United Nations	• Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017–2021 (2020 update) • Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017–2021 (2021 update)	National
MEHE	• Quality Education for Growth: National Education Strategy Framework–Education Sector Development Plan (General Education): 2010–2015	National
MEHE	• Reaching All Children with Education in Lebanon (RACE) Strategy 2014–2017	National
MEHE	• Reaching All Children with Education in Lebanon II (RACE II) Strategy 2017–2021	National
MEHE	• National Policy for Alternative Education Pathways: Meeting the Diverse Learning Needs for the Vulnerable and Marginalized Children and Youth in Lebanon	National
MEHE & UNICEF	• Psychosocial Support in the School Environment Activity Booklet (2019)	National
CERD	• Together towards new interactive curricula (2020)	National
World Bank	• Political Economy of Education in Lebanon: Research for Results Program (2020)	Global-National
UNICEF Lebanon	• Achievements–Mainstreaming Child Protection in Public Schools (2020)	National

Appendix E. Guiding Questions for the Policy Document Analysis

(Informed by Rizvi & Lingard (2010), Sum & Jessop (2013) and Higgins & Novelli (2020))

1. How is SEL defined and conceptualized in the policy text?
2. What problems are identified in the policy text, and how does the text frame the root causes?
3. What aims of SEL are described in the policy text?
4. How is SEL framed and conceived in the text as a solution to the problem?
5. What evidence is used to justify the need for SEL?
6. How does the policy text represent Lebanese and other refugee students, teachers, parents, and Lebanese authorities?
7. What social imaginaries are presented in the policy text?
8. How are certain forms of social relations are performed, repeated, and stabilized over time in the policy text?
9. What political and economic contexts influence the rise of SEL discourse in the policy text?
10. How does the policy text's content, its social imaginary may be understood within the global humanitarian and development aid architecture and geopolitics of aid?
11. Which of the agents are described to be more effective at advancing SEL discourse in the text because of their technical expertise?
12. How does the policy text use discursive technologies to discipline and control behaviors of Lebanese and refugee teachers and student

Appendix F. Semi-Structured Interview Protocol for the Secondary Data

Case Studies on the Integration of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) into Basic Education Programming Across the USAID Portfolio:
Key Informant Interview Guide for USAID staff

August 2020

[Introduction & Informed consent process]

Hello. My name is Jisun Jeong and I work as a consultant for NORC at the University of Chicago.
This interview is part of a broader case study research, examining the ways in which social and emotional learning (or SEL) and soft skills, or outcomes have been integrated in different USAID basic education programs. Lebanon's QITABI (Quality Instruction Towards Access and Basic Education Improvement) I & II programs.

Thanks to you and your team's generous support, we were able to review and code key program documents of the QITABI 1 and 2 programs. We are now conducting key informant interviews with USAID staff and implementing partners to further our understanding on the various aspects of your SEL programming and implementation. Your responses will help the research team document good practices and learnings on the SEL integration, which will contribute to improving future SEL and soft skills programming at USAID.

Participating in this interview is voluntary, and you may stop at any time. There are no direct benefits to you to participate, and there will be no penalty if you decline to participate. You should also feel free to skip any questions that you are not comfortable answering. The discussion will take about 50 minutes. Conversations will be audio recorded for analysis, but we will not collect any individual biometric information. Results of the discussion will only be presented and published in the report as coming from Program staff rather than individuals. Any individual identification will not be included. Would you allow us to include your name and position in the list of the interviewees at the end of the report?

Do you have any concerns? Thank you for your time speaking with us!

Interviewer name: _____

Interview date and Time: _____

Name of the respondent(s):

_____

Position/role of the respondent during the interviewed program design & implementation:

_____

 # years worked for the program: _____

[Interview questions]

RQ 1.1: How are SEL activities conceptualized and designed?

1. How did the QITABI 1 &2 programs define "Social and Emotional Learning"?

2. We found an implicit approach to SEL was used by training teachers on the child-friendly environment and integrating SEL themes into reading materials in QITABI 1 program. In QITABI 2, we found the program plan to provide explicit SEL instructions to the students and teachers. Are there any other entry points you plan to use to incorporate SEL into your program in QITBAI 2?
   2.1. What were the main reasons the QITABI 1 &2 incorporated the social and emotional learning component? Was SEL specifically desired?

   2.2. Why did you shift the SEL approach from implicit to explicit from QITABI 1 to QITABI 2 programs?

   2.3. How do you think the QITABI 2 incorporated some lessons you learned from the QITABI 1 program?

RQ 1.2. How are SEL programs adapted to context?

3. We found in our document review that the QITABI program has gone through several rigorous steps in contextualizing the SEL competencies through a partnership with Harvard EASEL lab, NYU's Global TIES for Children, and others. Can you briefly speak about the process, how the program determined the social and emotional skill priorities appropriate for Lebanon's culture and context?
   3.1. How did the program decide on a such process?

   3.2. What are tentative findings from the contextualization? Was there any misalignment between traditional values and SEL competencies that were developed in the West?

3.3. How do you plan to integrate the contextualized SEL competencies and skills into the QITABI II program?

3.4. Can you explain how the measurement tools, teacher training manuals and other SEL activity components are contextualized?

3.5. What is then happening now with the SEL component? Which SEL competencies and skills are emphasized?

RQ 1.3. How do SEL activities approach equity and inclusion?

4. We understand Syrian and Palestinian refugees attending 2nd shifts in public schools were identified as marginalized groups in the QITABI I program. Were there any other marginalized groups identified in QITABI 1 & 2 programs?

4.1. Do you think the program used or uses the SEL activities to improve the equity and inclusion of marginalized populations? How?

4.2. In the QITABI 1 mid-term evaluation, the program described challenges in equally benefiting refugee students (e.g., Syrian refugees do not get access to the ICT resource room and library and the MEHE didn't approve the non-formal education programs for Syrian refugees) with Lebanese. Are you facing any similar challenges with QITABI 2 program?

4.2.1. (If yes) How does the QITABI 2 plan to overcome such challenges and better include refugee students?

4.2.2. What other approaches are there that the QITABI 2 plans to use to be more inclusive of Syrian refugees and other marginalized groups?

4.3. How do you plan to account for differing perspectives and values between Syrian refugee families and Lebanese families in your contextualization process with the local schools across the country?

RQ 2.1. How are SEL activities implemented and managed?

5. How did the change in school climate and other SEL related outcomes happen as a consequence of the QITABI 1 program?

5.1. What were the similarities and differences between the actual change and the theory of change?

5.2. How are SEL activities in QITABI 2 being implemented so far?

6. How have the QITABI programs worked on sustainable transition plans to ensure the program's SEL approach and activities will continue after the USAID's funding finishes?

RQ 2.2. Who are key stakeholders, champions, and critics for SEL activities?

7. Who were the key stakeholders, champions, and critics incorporating SEL topics into the program?
   7.1. How did the program engage key stakeholders, including teachers, school administrators, family, community throughout the program?

   7.2. Is there any difference between QITABI 1 and 2 programs?

RQ 2.3. How do SEL programs approach measurement?

8. How is the SEL measurement approach of QITABI 2 different from QITABI 1?
   8.1. How do you plan to accurately measure the evolution of individual-level SEL skills as well as school-level outcomes?

   8.2. How will you ensure that the measurement tools accurately capture changes in social and emotional outcomes?

RQ 3. What are the best practices and lessons learned in designing, implementing, and measuring SEL in USAID's basic education and youth programs?

9. In your opinion, what was the biggest success in designing and implementing the QITABI's SEL activities?
   9.1. When thinking about the successes, what have been a few critical factors in achieving these successes?

10. What were the main barriers that you and the team have faced in designing and implementing the SEL activities to date?
    10.1. What could have been done to overcome these barriers?

11. Knowing what you know now, what would you do differently in designing and implementing SEL activities?

RQ 4. How can USAID better support mission staff to design and manage activities

towards social and emotional skills or outcomes?

12. What kind and level of support did you receive from USAID headquarters and USAID mission in designing and implementing the SEL activities?
    12.1. What more needs to be done?

13. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in our study and for sharing your valuable insights, we really appreciate it.

Appendix G. Summary of SEL-Related Terminology in Global Policy Texts

Policy text	SEL-related terminology	Definition of term	Conceptualization	Applicable contexts
USAID (2011)	• Life skills (youth) • PSS	Not defined or a focus • Life skills used for youth	Programming approach • PSS for teachers • Life skills for youth	Only in crisis and conflict-affected contexts
USAID (2018) USAID (2019)	• SEL and social and emotional skills (overall) • Soft skills (youth)	• Used the CASEL's definition	• Learning outcome • Programming approach • Skills of children, youth, teachers, caregivers	All contexts in the Global South (Low-income, stable context & crisis-affected contexts)
UNICEF (2019a) UNICEF (2019b)	• Transferable skills • In crisis-affected settings, SEL & PSS as well (Associated terms: life skills, 21st-century skills, soft skills, socioemotional skills)	• "Skills and values that are developed progressively from early years and allow young people to become agile, adaptive learners and citizens equipped to navigate personal, social, academic, economic and environmental challenges" (p. 29)	• Learning outcomes • Safe and protective learning environment • Teacher wellbeing • Positive discipline • Program models (crisis-affected)	All contexts in the Global South (Low-income, stable context & crisis-affected contexts)
UNICEF (2019c)	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)	The composite term MHPSS describes any type of local or outside support that aims to protect or promote psychosocial well-being or prevent or treat mental health conditions (p. 5)	Intervention or support (programming approach)	Can be applied to all but focus on crisis-affected settings
UNICEF (2007)	Life skills	• Not defined formally but explains what "effective life skills program" entail:	Programming approach	All contexts

Policy text	SEL-related terminology	Definition of term	Conceptualization	Applicable contexts
		focus on self-identity, negotiating skills and coping behaviors (p. 11)		
INEE (2018) INEE (2016)	SEL & PSS	• "SEL is an important component of PSS . . . contributes to improved psychosocial wellbeing" (CASEL's definition) • PSS involves "processes and actions that promote the holistic wellbeing of people in their social world" (INEE, 2018, pp. 14-15)	• Programming approach • Safe and supportive learning environment • Pedagogies • Skills to foster	Crisis-affected contexts, (preparedness, mitigation, response, reconstruction)
ECW (2018)	Socioemotional well-being, psychosocial protection	Not explicitly defined	Overarching programming goals	Crisis-affected contexts particularly protracted crises
ECW (2021)	• MHPSS (subsumes PSS & SEL) - Used definitions from INEE for SEL, PSS & MHPSS from IASC (2007) and UNICEF	• Structured, goal-oriented, evidence-informed interventions and approaches in formal and nonformal education settings that promote and protect the wellbeing and holistic learning outcomes of all children (p. 3)	• Programming approach • Teachable skills • Teaching • Educator well-being • Caregiver ability to protect • Measurable outcome	
EU (2019)	SEL & PSS (based on INEE, 2016)	CASEL and INEE (2016)	• Programming approach (interventions) • Teacher well-being • Caregiver support	Crisis-affected contexts

Policy text	SEL-related terminology	Definition of term	Conceptualization	Applicable contexts
EU (2020)	Transferable skills, social and emotional skills, noncognitive skills, 21st-century skills	Skills that are considered as not specifically related to a particular job, task, academic discipline, or area of knowledge and that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings. (p. 41)	• Skills for life • Skills that influence children building foundational skills (reading and math)	Low-income, stable context
UNHCR (2012)	• PSS • Life skills for youth	• No specific definition for PSS • Life skills included personal development skills of critical thinking as well as reproductive health and HIV prevention (p. 25)	• Programming approach • Skills to be developed through learning	Refugee crisis
UNHCR (2019)	SEL, PSS (based on INEE, 2016)	CASEL and INEE (2016)	• SEL to foster conditions to learn • PSS, a programming approach	Refugee crisis
FCDO (2017)	PSS	Did not define but cited INEE (2016) in which "mental health and psychosocial support" (MHPSS) was used (IASC, 2007)	• Intervention (programming approach)	Protracted conflict, refugee crisis, and natural disasters
FCDO (2018)	Transferable skills	UNICEF (2019a, p. 29)	• Programming approach (interventions) • Learning outcome	Low-income, stable context
World Bank (2011)	No particular terminology used for nonacademic skills	Social, communication, teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills are invaluable for people to function well at home, in their	• Skills to foster for life and work, but not learning outcomes to measure	Low-income, stable context

Policy text	SEL-related terminology	Definition of term	Conceptualization	Applicable contexts
		communities, and at work (p. 26)		
World Bank (2018a) World Bank (2019)	Socioemotional skills	• Adapted from the CASEL definition (p.102) • Skills needed for the basis of learning how to learn and for making the vision a reality (e.g., conscientiousness, perseverance)	• Skills to foster to facilitate learning foundational skills (literacy, numeracy) • Measurable learning outcome, teaching performance	Low-income, stable context
World Bank (2018b)	• Psychosocial training • Skills	• Not specifically defined, but used skills, life skills, and psychosocial training	• Programming approach	• Crisis-affected contexts